

U.S.A. AT WORK AND PLAY

U.S.A. AT WORK AND PLAY:

*DEPICTING THE OUTLOOK AND
LIFE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE*

BY
ALICIA STREET



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FOREWORD

MY friend, Mrs. Alicia Street, has made a unique contribution to Anglo-American understanding. During the past year we have all welcomed the publication of several new histories of the United States: they have done much to light up the story of America's past, which has been obscure to too many British readers. Now comes Mrs. Street to answer a few simple questions—simple, but of the very first importance. What are the Americans really like—the ordinary Americans in the back streets, out on the farms, working in the offices, baking in the kitchens? I say first importance because understanding must begin in the grass roots, among ordinary people who form the often inarticulate but solid body of public opinion. Mrs. Street presents the Americans as they are, not as over-zealous propagandists would like us to be or as Hollywood has sometimes made us out to be.

Ten years ago I was talking to one of my first Women's Institute audiences in a rural county in England. At question time one of the women, with unaffected seriousness, asked me: "Do you have any homes in America, or do you all live in penthouse apartments and go to night clubs to dinner?" Hollywood has taught many lessons about America which need to be unlearned.

I hope Mrs. Street's book will find its way into many homes throughout Britain. I hope your teachers will read it as a sane supplement to all their study of America's picturesque past. Thousands of men and women, and increasing thousands of children, in these islands are starting an animated correspondence with unknown friends in America—their "opposite numbers." They will find this book invaluable. You may be welcoming into your homes some of the American soldiers now arriving in this country, and you may be bewildered and puzzled by their speech, their outlook and their manner.

This book will help you to find the answers to some of the questions you may be too diffident to ask these boys.

When you peel off the surface of American life, you may be surprised to find underneath how much there is in common between our two people. Georges Duhamel spent a few weeks in America some years ago, went back to France and wrote the inevitable traveller's commentary, summed up in this sentence: "The only trouble with America is that she has passed from barbarism to decadence without going through the intervening stage of civilization." You may agree with me that this was a shallow and brittle judgment.

And I can think of no better corrective than Alicia Street's story. She interprets the common people of America to the common people of Britain. And since Henry Wallace tells us that we are entering the century of the common man, this is a task well worth the effort.

ARTHUR NEWELL.

U.S.A. AT WORK AND PLAY

CHAPTER ONE THE AMERICAN'S OUTLOOK

*Spirit of Adventure still alive in Present-day Restlessness—
Pioneer and Immigrant Background—Pride in the Democratic
Spirit*

NOT even the most avid reader of Wild West fiction or gangster stories believes that the United States of America is inhabited entirely by hard-riding bronco-busters or baby-faced gunmen. The days of the gangster are over and the cowboy in reality is seldom a figure of romance. Schoolboys dream of becoming airplane pilots rather than Capones. But many an American who leads a quiet, respectable life, breaking only an occasional speed law in an emergency, once harboured a sneaking admiration for the Public Enemies of the 1920's or the gun-toting plainsmen of a previous era.

It was not violence in itself that the American desired. He knew he was a lucky man. He had his wife and the children; his home, a white clapboard bungalow equipped with an electric washing machine and a refrigerator; he had a steady job, a car which would be completely paid for by the time he wanted to turn it in on a new model, and perhaps he even owned a few acres of land and a cabin on some quiet lake in the wilds.

But something was lacking, although he didn't quite know what. Life was not all that he had vaguely thought it would be. He thought maybe the cowboy or the bank-robber had something more. In the words of an American novelist, Michael Foster, he was "a hopeful little boy who looks in his spiritual stocking every morning and is always surprised to find it empty."

The rather wistful pursuit of happiness which occupies the average American is not a thing which can be easily

filmed by Hollywood or quickly understood by the stranger. That the Americans are a restless people he can clearly see ; it was not only for economic reasons that, before the war, by day and by night they drove aimlessly for miles in their cars, preferring motion to the quiet comfort of home. Equally restless (for the entire American people is drawn from the adventurous elements of older societies), their fathers shook the Old World dust from their feet and embarked on a new life, or, coming of older American stock, followed the frontier westward throughout the nineteenth century. Now there is no longer a frontier, an 'edge of civilization' from which young men may set forth to live adventurous independent lives. But the wanderlust and the adventurous spirit are still theirs, tempered only by increased reliance on the comforts of the machine age, a possessiveness which is a natural reaction to hard frontier life or a background of poverty in Europe, and sometimes by the secret fears that came out of the great depression.

It is as difficult to make a statement which is true of all Americans, as distinct from people of other nations, as it is to describe in one sentence the people who inhabit the British Isles. There are exceptions to every rule. But if there is one thing which Americans have in common, rich and poor, mountaineers and plainsmen, the descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers and the sons of recent immigrants, it is a pride in America which grows out of their belief that America has given them a better life than they could have lived in the country whence they came.

This belief is both the result of the personal histories of the Americans and the long-striven-for goal of much education for Americanization. 'Eighteen-year-old Betsy Ross Jones, who takes natural pride in her descent from one of the heroines of the War of Independence, still thinks of the British as villainous red-coats. Furthermore, American thought has been influenced by the more stirring pieces of early American literature, and these were the orations spoken against England in the late colonial period.

Then again, no conflict of loyalty between his native

land and America troubles Pete Morich, who until the age of twelve was a herdboyc on a Serbian hillside, and who now, at fifty, sees his sons and daughters studying at the state university to become teachers, doctors, engineers. From Herbert Smith who, as a scholar at an English Public School, learned that even when educational equality is granted in England social equality may be denied, to Nels Thorwald, who ran away from home in Norway because he hated farm work, almost every immigrant American has had some reason for resentment against the country of his origin and has often passed the grudge on, consciously or unconsciously, to his children and grandchildren born in the United States.

It is this antipathy to Europe which has made possible the growth of the American ideal of the 'melting pot.' A European who, although proud of the past glory of his race, rejoices for ever in his escape from his native village easily accepts the United States as his own country and all the Americans, of whatever descent, as his own people. Indeed, not only does he accept them as fellow-citizens, but he is proud of the way in which they have given up the minor loyalties of original nationality.

There is no heartache when Nick Cardoni's daughter Flora, instead of marrying another Italian, becomes the wife of a tow-headed Finn called Sulo Tyyska. And when Flora and Sulo in turn have a daughter of marriageable age and she falls in love with Stanley Worachek, whose father came from Poland and whose mother was born in Cornwall, the family feels that the increasing mixture of races is making each successive generation more truly American. Theodore Roosevelt, who was in many ways a typical American, rejoiced that he was born of English, Dutch, Scotch, Irish and French antecedents. Although the term, 'the melting pot,' became current only after the great immigrations of the 1860-1900 period, the melting process started very early. By 1713 eighteen languages were being spoken in the streets of New York City. Certainly mixed marriage and the American climate, diet,

and living conditions have combined to produce physical types rarely seen in Europe.

The renouncement of the old country, the mixture of races through intermarriage, and the fact that the history of the American nation is a pattern of the history of the individual American, have made possible the acceptance of American history as their own history by millions of Americans whose ancestors were not even remotely concerned with the American War of Independence or the Civil War.

Year after year, thousands of children memorize Lincoln's Gettysburg Address: "Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation"—feeling that Lincoln was speaking of *their* forefathers, although they know that their grandparents came to America only some years after Lincoln died. There is no bond of blood between them and the men who framed the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution.

No physical kinship is necessary where there exists a spiritual bond made up of a sympathetic understanding of the experiences and the attitude of mind of those who take the difficult step of leaving family and friends to establish a home for themselves in a distant land. A child who, pausing on the front porch in the summer twilight, hears his mother say in a strange sad voice, "It's thirty years ago to-night that I last saw my mother, back in the old country. She's an old woman now, but I suppose she's still waiting . . .," begins to understand the price paid by successive waves of new arrivals from European ports for the privilege of becoming citizens of the United States. On the other hand, the boy in whose veins flows the blood of four or five races of Europe, whose ancestors fought on both sides in the major European wars, were oppressors and oppressed, must accept as his own the early history of America or feel himself completely disinherited. But indeed he wants no other bond; as much as any European national sees in himself an embodiment of the history and traditions of his country, this boy is the embodi-

ment of American history. Every person who has gone to America to try to make a better living and a better life for himself has, by his action, corroborated the judgment of the "founding fathers" and so made them his spiritual ancestors.

If the first thing that Americans have in common is their faith that in America they will have a better life than anywhere else, this belief soon grows into a second one which each newcomer accepts as soon as he has learned to understand it. That is the belief that the reason why life in the United States is better than life elsewhere is that the U.S.A. is the most democratic country in the world.

By democratic the American means not only that the government depends on the consent of the governed, but that the social organization of the country is such that every individual in it has the right and the opportunity to develop and use his abilities to the fullest extent, within, of course, the framework of the law. That conditions in the United States fall short of this ideal has been painfully evident since the great depression, and even before 1929 there were thousands of people in America whose standard of living was almost incredibly low. But during all the earlier years when there was land to be had for the asking (and the granting of free plots of land, called homesteads, to people who fulfilled certain residence and cultivation requirements ended only in 1935), it was generally true that any man who worked hard could find scope for his talent and make a reasonably good living for himself and his family.

The labour shortage caused by expanding markets both at home and abroad made it comparatively easy for a man, dissatisfied with one vocation, to leave it for another; and each man could hope to improve his status, the small farmer by buying more land, the factory hand by becoming foreman.

Until the depression (which lasted roughly from 1929 to 1933), the unemployed were, in the eyes of the average American, shiftless no-accounts. However, when the de-

pression threw millions of hitherto hard-working and successful men out of their jobs, they were bewildered and bitterly ashamed to find themselves in the ranks of those whom they had so long condemned. A few lost faith in democracy. But, although the great majority felt that something had gone very wrong somewhere or grimly accepted the idea that depressions and booms were bound to follow each other to the end of time and could not be prevented, no one questioned the fundamental premise that all men had a right to what Lincoln called "an open field and a fair chance for (your) industry, enterprise, and intelligence."

The American cult of self-made men, some of whom undoubtedly made a very bad job of it, still encourages the miner's son and the dust-collector's daughter to get jobs waiting on table, stoking furnaces or minding babies, in order to earn the cost of room and board at teachers' colleges and universities. For many the struggle ends in failure and they slide back to the economic level from which they tried to rise. Tillie Johnson's mother breaks her leg and Tillie packs up her books and goes home to take care of the younger children in the family and eventually to marry the garage mechanic who lives down the street. Joe Brown fails in a maths. course and, after four years at a great university, finds himself driving a goods van.

Even during the depression, however, many who started at the bottom of the ladder were able to get the training essential to establishing themselves in their chosen professions. Most Americans are not very class-conscious, unless they are recent immigrants who have not forgotten old-country concepts of what is "right" for "the likes of them" or "the likes of us." The miner's son who has become a successful lawyer or doctor takes pride in his career, not so much because he feels that he has risen from one class to another, as because he has reached an economic level on which he is able to live a fuller, richer life than was possible for his father. In America the idea of democracy is inevitably associated with the idea of the fluidity

of the social system. It is this essential fluidity, which allows an individual to rise from the bottom or to fall from the top according to his deserts, that Americans have felt was lacking in the more densely populated democracies of pre-Hitler Europe.

*No Place for the Autocrat—Admiration for Manual Skill—
Woman has won Her Own Place—The Hospitable and Gre-
garious American—Race for Easier Living Conditions—The
Puritan Outlook*

AMERICANS themselves hardly realize the extent to which their attitudes toward many things are still moulded by the conditions under which their country grew into one of the Great Powers. It seems that the poet's dictum that "the child is father to the man" is as true of nations as it is of human beings. In any case, the strength of the frontier tradition can be gauged by the ease with which it has imposed itself upon the millions of immigrants who have entered the country since 1880.

The very things which first impress the visitor to the United States—the lack of respect for title and dignity, the forthrightness of manner which approximates rudeness, the hospitality for which Americans are famous—all are the concomitants of pioneer life which have continued to be living folkways long after the pioneer days have passed. Manual skill was admired by the frontiersman who judged a man, not by his 'book-larnin', but by his ability to build himself a house, make furniture, produce food, and by his skill as hunter or shepherd to procure the raw materials out of which his wife could make clothing. Gradually this attitude developed into the present American passion for skill to which Dixon Wecter referred when he said that the American equivalent of the Greek motto, "Know thyself" was "Know thy stuff." Where life depended on the skill of one's hands, little respect could be felt for the talker or the thinker, and the American still feels a certain scorn of both politicians and philosophers.

Even the position of women and the glorification of mothers and the "All that I am or hope to be I owe to my angel mother" mode of thinking are in part the result

of the shortage of women in backwoods districts seventy-five or a hundred years ago. Another legacy from the past is the Puritanism which was carried to the Middle West by New Englanders, who left their rocky hillsides for the rich loam of the Ohio valley. It forbade the legitimate emotional outlets of art and music and encouraged the hysteria of camp-meeting religion.

Because of the influences of pioneer life, the American, to be judged fairly, must be judged against his own background and not in accordance with the standards of a different culture. The traveller who, on his arrival at the dock in New York City, is shocked to hear cab-drivers shouting at him "Out of the way, buddy!" fails to realize that Americans genuinely do not care whether they are addressed as 'sir,' 'big boy,' 'buddy' or 'mister.' During the period of more than a century when, in conditions of extreme hardship, men and women were steadily driving the frontier before them, Americans learned to judge people primarily by the qualities that made a good frontiersman. What they had been in the past did not matter because, at the frontier, people forgot the past and thought only of the future. British visitors who, like Mrs. Frances Trollope in 1832, deplored the 'want of refinement' among Americans forgot that want of refinement was the inevitable result of the kind of life Americans had to accept if the country was to develop.

Similarly, in the earliest colonial period, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, had been united by the common necessity of working exceedingly hard to ensure bare survival. Conditions tended to bring both ends of the social scale closer together; the wealthy, cultured, and aristocratic had to work as hard as any peasant, and the ownership of land (mortgage-encumbered though it might be) gave the poorest member of the community a feeling of self-respect. Every man alike was 'Mr.' or just plain 'Jim.' Even professional titles such as 'Doctor' or 'Professor' were robbed of dignity by being abbreviated to 'Doc' and 'Prof.'

This democratic tendency, natural under prevailing conditions, was reinforced by an historic distrust of authority. The unpopularity of some of the royal governors and, eventually, of the king himself in the eighteenth century, became a strong antipathy to anything that savoured, however faintly, of autocracy. The intense feeling against a presidential third term, which was overcome for the first time in 1940, is another manifestation of the same attitude.

American manners show a corresponding lack of deference. The New York policeman says brusquely, "Step on it!" whereas the gentler London bobby finds "Move along, please," sufficient. Sometimes the American justifies his unintentional rudeness by saying that he has no time for unnecessary frills in his speech, but, in fact, he rarely saves time or breath by omitting the courtesies. More plausible a reason for the preference for plain speech is found in the idea generally current in the United States that villainy and a smooth tongue naturally go together. Like Thomas Jefferson, the average American considers the plain-spoken farmer a prince among men. It must be admitted, however, that the mass mind, like the individual mind, has little respect for consistency, and having agreed that virtue lies in the unspoiled rustic, nevertheless sees no harm in giving him as much 'schooling' as possible.

Another feature of life in the newly settled 'open spaces' was that it gave people little opportunity of contact with visitors from the outside world or, indeed, with each other. In most parts of the United States the winter is long and harsh, and farmers whose nearest neighbour was five or ten miles away and who had to sandwich their travels between the times when live stock were fed and cows milked, did not indulge in much casual social intercourse. A visit to a distant farmstead was preceded by much planning and happy anticipation on the part of both guests and host and the meals that were served in its celebration were worthy of so pleasant an occasion. The very triteness of the phrases, "Western hospitality," "Southern hospitality," "New England hospitality," reveals the extent

to which it became customary in every part of the country to offer a warm welcome to anyone who broke the monotony of life.

Once the land had been ploughed, the richness of the soil in many places made such hospitality comparatively easy. Wild game was plentiful, and every farmer faced the winter with a good supply of home-cured pork. His wife was proud of her ability as cook, and particularly of some speciality for which she had won local fame. Perhaps she was a good hand at pastry; perhaps it was spring chicken fried in freshly churned butter that won her the highest praise. During the summer the younger children had spent hours gathering fruit—delicious wild strawberries, raspberries, blueberries and wild cherries. In autumn, shelves were stocked with jam, jelly and apple butter, while from the vegetable garden had come the ingredients for a dozen kinds of pickles.

Sometimes even Americans (usually so respectful of the signs of progress) bewail the passing of the good old days when housewives, however well acquainted they were with the uses of the tomahawk, knew nothing about the tin-opener. The American diet has greatly changed. But the tradition of generous hospitality remains unchanged and, especially in rural areas, many a hostess would scorn to invite 'company' to a table less heavily laden than that at which her mother presided. And even though the more sophisticated modern takes less pleasure in the joys of the table than did his Victorian elders, he remains as gregarious as they.

The pioneer life was a good life as regards the things that were obtainable without the expenditure of money. But adequately fed and warmly clad and housed though the pioneers might be, they were always pressed by a need of cash. The farmer could build his house, make his furniture, clear and plough the land if he had the tools, but the tools cost money. He had little to sell and much to buy. He mortgaged his property if he could, in order to obtain ready cash. When he could not get more money

he used his wits to devise some means of managing without it. For instance, an old settler in northern Michigan was unable to buy dynamite to blow up the great stumps of trees that were left in the ground he was clearing. He uprooted them by thrusting under each stump a tough, slender log which he used as a lever, weighing it down at the other end by seating on it his wife and all the children. Then, by his own strength, he controlled the movement of the lever, occasionally taking the burden of the log with



INGENIOUS PIONEERS.

the entire family on it to prevent it from crashing to the ground suddenly and causing injury to any of its precious row of human weights.

Such ingenuity made possible steady progress in improving the land. But the work was heartbreakingly difficult and only made the frontiersman long more fervently for the time when he could afford to buy the equipment which would make his task easier. Every setback caused by frost, hail, flood or drought sharpened his need. Meanwhile, he took a natural pride in what he had accomplished

by himself and looked scornfully upon those who were not, like himself, jacks of all trades. Many a country preacher found it wise to acquire exceptional skill in splitting wood for kitchen fires, and Abraham Lincoln was not the only American politician who made good electioneering capital of his admittedly brief and none too satisfactory experience as rail-splitter.

In the end, the pioneer got what he had worked for. He set himself a goal, achieved it, and immediately set himself another. The sod hut on the prairie, the cabin in the forest became decent dwelling-houses. Water, first fetched from a spring, then pumped from a well in the farmyard, was finally piped into the kitchen. Bare floors were covered with home-made rag rugs ; later, the housewife spent happy hours poring over the mail-order catalogue choosing her first 'store' carpet.

The progressive habits of mind of those early days remained. They were carried to the city by the sons who left home ; they were inherited by the daughter who married a village boy and moved to town. Goal after goal was still set up. Her interest stimulated by the nationally circulated women's magazines as her mother's had been by the mail-order catalogue, daughter has learned to want a shower fixture in her tiled bath and an automatic heat-control on her electric iron and toaster, while her husband looks forward to owning a motor-car with the newest devices, including a driver-controlled windscreen wiper for the rear window.

The belief in progress which grew out of the amelioration of living conditions on the frontier has brought about an almost unthinking acceptance of any gadget that is new. The pioneer's need for money with which to buy the means to a more comfortable life very naturally has bred respect for money itself. The habit of industry, which was once a necessity, is regarded as a virtue and people continue to work merely for the sake of working. Admiration of manual skill has at times become hero-worship of the most successful tinkers, Henry Ford and Thomas

Edison having been listed more than once as the greatest of all Americans. And the position of the American woman is still, to some extent, different from that of women elsewhere, because she shared with men the hardships of pioneer life and thus proved herself to be in many ways their equal.

The United States has been called both the most Christian and the least Christian country of the western world. Natives of countries which have a state religion sometimes find it hard to understand a system of government which upholds a belief in religious toleration to the extent of completely separating religious from the secular education in the state schools. Confusing, too, is the great number of sects which have won adherents, some only locally, others on a nation-wide scale. Yet it is not surprising that in a country so huge as the United States, to which have come immigrants from the four corners of the earth, each to worship as he pleases, there is so great a diversity of creed and custom.

The church has always played an important part in American life and her influence is still strong. Every radio station in the country (and there are thousands established in small towns as well as large) has its daily religious service, taken by the various denominations in turn. In many small towns, social life centres as much around the churches as around the school.

One religious influence in particular, the Puritan tradition, though varying in strength from one part of the country to another, is generally a still potent factor in determining the point of view adopted by the average citizen. The wearing away of certain old taboos has left others untouched; a girl may wear brilliant lipstick but feel that it is wicked to dye her hair. Only persistent advertising by large tobacco corporations has worn down the prejudice against women smoking, and I cannot imagine the pastor of a small town church offering a woman a cigarette.

One part of the legacy of Puritanism seems to have been

lost completely, however, and that is the belief that discomfort is a virtue. Perhaps a surfeit of discomfort during pioneer days cured the American for ever of any faith of that sort. Certainly he believes firmly that comfort is a good and a desirable thing; he likes warm houses, overstuffed chairs, hot baths, soft collars. If it were not for the American winter, which no amount of central heating will banish, he might peacefully succumb to the blandishments of too sybaritic an existence and cease to do anything at all. But the winter gales that sweep down from the Arctic blow in even through double windows, freeze motors that contain anti-freezing solutions, pile up snow that blocks highways faster than great snowploughs can clear it away. And the poor comfort-loving American fights his way against the icy winds, never suspecting that winter is saving his soul for him.

*The Average American wants an Education—Its Objects—
American Arts not fully grown—A Different Sense of
Humour—Why He likes a Tall Story—Some Things
inherited from the British*

I SAID to Mrs. Fitt, who was trying to dust my desk without disturbing my typewriter: "Mrs. Fitt, what do you think about Americans?" Mrs. Fitt pushed a strand of hair behind her ear and answered more slowly than is usual for a London charwoman with a generous gift of Cockney wit.

"Well, of course," she said, "everyone knows Americans is wonderful learned people."

No diplomat could have made a more tactful reply, for the average American is convinced that in this world it is impossible to have too much of two things—ice cream and education—and of the two, ice cream must be paid for but education ought to be free. The frontier life fought against the cultural tradition and often seemed to have defeated it. But from the time of the foundation of the first New England colony in the early seventeenth century, the belief that an educated populace is essential if a democratic form of government is to continue to function successfully, had been handed down from generation to generation, surviving a thousand local deaths and finally becoming a basic part of the national outlook.

Although the frontiersman's experience always made him susceptible to the opinion that common sense is better than schooling, he inherited the New England attitude toward education and eventually supported the legislation that grew out of it. By about 1835 the present system of state-supported free elementary schools had been established, and as state after state was settled and taken into the Union, each set aside land and revenue for the support of the school system. Similar progress was made in the

establishment of high schools, universities, teachers' colleges, and private foundations of many kinds—probably, to European minds, of too many kinds!

The feeling of the common man that he is as good as anyone else has had its effect on the types of institution loosely termed "colleges" in the United States. With all their respect for education, many Americans do not want unpractical schooling. What they want is to attend college of some sort. Very well; they go to barber colleges, beauty culture colleges, commercial colleges, colleges that teach salesmanship (and resistance to salesmanship), advertising techniques, and radio mechanics. They are by no means blind to the differences between, say, the Watoska College of Physical Culture and Harvard. But all college life has been glamourized by the films and in cheap fiction, and so to "college" they go.

Americans dislike the word 'apprentice' as much as they do 'peasant' and vigorously resent being called either. What a boy in Europe learns in a craftsman's workshop, the boy in the United States prefers to learn in school. One advantage of his system is that although, like the European apprentice, he may have ceased to study history, science or foreign languages, so long as he attends state schools for his vocational training he is often obliged to supplement shop-work with social science courses. These are intended to make him a better-informed citizen. The influence of those conditions in the history of the country which made for lawlessness and unthinking mob action has been diminished by the steady effort of educationists to create a politically informed populace.

The American's attitude toward education has also been affected by the fact that formal education pays rich dividends in the way of incomes in later years. Many circumstances helped to create a situation in which financial success ranked higher than any other achievement, and therefore anything that made financial success easier to obtain was looked upon as desirable. Competition for the prizes of economic security and power has always been extremely

fierce in the United States because the contest is open to all comers. No advantage at the start can be ignored.

Moreover, in education, as in every other field, what attracts the American is the immediately useful. For instance, Latin is taught less for its value as a key to a great literature than for the aid its mastery gives in understanding and writing English. Some knowledge of arithmetic is necessary to everyone, but the average American never meets a logarithm, in school or out. Classes in English spend more time on learning how to write letters than they do on Chaucer. They learn to write intelligible telegrams, to use the telephone. If they suddenly found themselves in solitary confinement it would not take them long to repeat to themselves their entire repertoire of memorized poetry. But Americans do not expect to spend much time in solitary confinement.

This pragmatism is particularly pronounced among men, with the result that culture is largely a feminine prerogative in the United States. American women, eager to give their children a background of social grace and enlightenment, and getting little assistance from their hard-working husbands, have attacked the citadels of learning by themselves. Sometimes they make pathetically little progress. What they cannot understand from their own experience they cast aside with distaste, and their experience is often very limited. But intellectually they are not smug. They want to learn; they are eager to understand. If they are conservative in their tastes, so are the masses of the people in every part of the world.

Confronted with the art and literature of other nations, the average American is self-conscious and uncertain. Although the man in the street is intensely nationalistic and takes pride in the work of his countrymen, he is easily made to feel on the defensive, and usually succeeds in only partially hiding his uneasiness by an assumed air of bravado. This sensitiveness is especially noticeable in the American's attitude toward England. Whereas he feels no need to prove his country's worth to Greek, Dane or Italian, he

still feels a strange compulsion to justify himself and his nation to the British. Likewise, he resents adverse criticism from the British more than from any other people.

Nevertheless, Americans would rather be criticized adversely than be ignored. The old New Englander and the Southern planter whose position survived the Civil War may feel sufficiently sure of themselves and their destiny to have no curiosity about other people's opinion of them, but the majority of their fellow-citizens take an adolescent's delight in hearing themselves discussed, analysed and encouraged. The English, after having read every dissertation on their national characteristics, from St. Augustine to Maurois, are only mildly interested when a foreigner enthusiastically discusses them. But the American race is not yet completely formed; it is still in the melting pot and Americans themselves are not sure what is going to come out.

Fortunately, the sense of humour which is a component of the national character usually enables Americans to take a joke, even when it is directed against themselves. Sometimes the contrast between the nation's ideals and its actions is painfully evident to the most patriotic citizen and a guilty conscience makes laughter difficult, a fact learned by more than one foreign lecturer who made a witticism about American imperialism. But in general, Americans love laughter and will forgive much that they would otherwise find unforgivable if it is given to them in an amusing form.

On the quality of the American sense of humour opinions vary greatly. The eminent Chinese writer, Lin Yutang, says that the Americans have no sense of humour in the European sense of the term; they have only a marked sense of fun. Others say that American humour lacks wit, while another critic finds wit in every turn of speech. The American sense of humour is so different from that of the English that in America the Englishman has long had a reputation for never being able to see a joke, a miscon-

ception that will, perhaps, be corrected by the humorous stories of British reactions to the Blitz.

Of the nation's heroes, Abraham Lincoln, Ben Franklin, and in our own day, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, are men whose sense of humour is one of their best-known characteristics, and American literary history includes a long list of humorous writers.

American jokes reveal two attitudes characteristic of the people: admiration of bigness, and sympathy with the underdog. Just as English humour is not limited to that of under-statement, American humour is not limited to over-statement, but there is no doubt that Uncle Sam likes a tall story as much as he likes tall buildings. The vast size of his country, the extremes of climate, the violence of changes in weather, the variety of scenery, the clarity of the atmosphere, which is charged with electricity—all of these things encourage the exaggeration in which Americans take delight.

It was in the last century, during the settlement of the West, that the tall story flourished most vigorously. Men who had seen for the first time the giant redwood trees of California, the greatest trees in the world, came back to tell their friends that the trees in the Yosemite Valley "are so high that it takes two men and a boy to see the top of them." Similarly, a visitor to Niagara Falls came home complaining that the cab-fares were so high that the falls were insignificant in comparison. The traditional fondness for 'big talk' has even led to the organization, in the last decade or so, of a group called the Burlington Liars' Club, the members of which annually compete for the honour of having told the year's tallest tale. (The prize-winning yarn a few years ago was the one about a grandfather clock which was so old that the shadow of the pendulum swinging back and forth had worn a hole through the back of the clock.)

The universal quick sympathy for the 'underdog' accounts for the popularity of Charlie Chaplin, Mickey Mouse and Brer Rabbit. It is doubtful whether more

Americans have been the underdog in the past than have people in other countries, but the fellow at the bottom in many nations has not always been aware of his position or, if aware of it, has not always resented it. American resentments have always been quick and vocal, and have invariably been accompanied by the opening of that safety-valve, the movement to the West. So, instead of leaving behind a trail of minor revolutions and age-old feuds, they have left only that turn of mind which makes the American sympathize with both the shorn lamb and the lone wolf.

A great British newspaper has long classified news into three groups : British, American, and foreign. With the many characteristics that make the American different from the Englishman in mind, it may be difficult to see why there have ever been three classifications rather than two. The reason is that great as are the differences between the two peoples, the similarities uniting them are greater. So strongly is the American, of whatever origin, marked by the Anglo-Saxon tradition bequeathed him by his cultural forefathers, that to-day he behaves in his environment and reacts to it, not as a German, or a Rumanian, or a Serb behaves, but more or less as the British would do. The American of Prussian descent does not like goose-stepping any more than an Englishman does. An American, who for any reason wishes to change his name, almost invariably chooses an Anglo-Saxon one despite the fact that there are as many people with non-British names in America as with British ones. Germans change Bauer to Bower, Schmidt to Smith ; Italians abbreviate Fossotti to Foss. It is easier to buy Cornish pasties and saffron buns in northern Michigan than it is in London. If the American woman has more freedom than women in most parts of the world, it is because the Britisher, however dubious he may sometimes be about the quality of the feminine mind, always assumes that in a crisis his womenfolk will behave worthily, and in America, where life in the wilds produced

many crises, they have had the opportunity to prove that his attitude was justified.

From the British the Americans have inherited a taste for compromise, admittedly not apparent in such outbursts of mob action as lynchings, but none the less a strong factor again and again in determining the course of the country's history. It was a compromise measure that originally decreed the establishment of a Congress with two houses ; it was a compromise measure that postponed the outbreak of the Civil War by at least ten years. The slogan under which the nation moved from isolationism in 1939 to the repeal of neutrality legislation in 1941, " All aid to Britain short of war," was another and a most ingenious compromise.

Like the British, Americans have usually preferred to take plenty of time in trying to find a peaceful solution to a problem, and their efforts have brought forth genuine contributions to political thought. For instance, the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 opened the land lying west of the Allegheny and the Appalachian Mountains for indefinite increase in population, and promised admission of newly formed states to the Union on a basis of absolute equality with the original Eastern ones. This was a complete change from the European doctrine that colonies should occupy a position inferior to that of the mother country and should be developed for her benefit, but in its simplicity and practicability it was one which the British, too, were able to accept.

Americans, then, are indebted to the British for their Bill of Rights and the democratic form of their government, for that respect for the dignity of the common man which was first revealed in the Mayflower Covenant when the Pilgrims agreed that they would abide by the expressed common will. Their national history grows out of the political history of England, and English history before the American Revolution is therefore also American history. And when the United States chose to base her way of life on the Magna Charta and made the English language the

medium of her speech, she inherited, too, the literature of Chaucer and Shakespeare. To Americans, the Panthéon in Paris is a sight; Westminster Abbey is a shrine. Wordsworth's celandine and Emerson's rhodora grow in the same meadow. It is not necessary to explain carefully to the American as a recent translator explains to the French that Alice in Wonderland is not intended to make sense, but nonsense. When Uncle Sam and old John Bull speak of the things that matter, their accents are indistinguishable.

Immense Distances in U.S.A.—Wide Variety of Scenery, Climate, Production and Outlook—Americans' Loyalty to Their Locality—A Broad View of U.S.A.—The States and Their Cities—The Industrial North-East—The Changing Middle West—The Once-romantic South—The Varied West

I DO not know whether the Londoner travelling in the United States ever meets Americans who say, "Ah, so you come from London, England! I've got some cousins over there—maybe you know them. They're not very far from you—they live in a town called Berwick-on-Tweed." If so, he can understand what every American who has crossed the Atlantic has experienced at least once, for to every American abroad someone has said, "You're from New York (or Chicago or Los Angeles), are you? I wonder if you know the Smiths in Portland, Oregon?"

If Americans make such an error in judgment, it is because in their eyes England is a tiny country with a population that is small in comparison with their own. The Englishman cannot plead this excuse. There are 131,500,000 Americans, and they live in an area covering half a continent. Whereas Manchester and Liverpool lie approximately two hundred miles distant from London, and Birmingham and Bristol little more than one hundred, San Francisco is more than three thousand miles from New York, Chicago eight hundred and fifty, Detroit nearly seven hundred. Cities on the Pacific coast are farther from Washington, their political capital, than London is from Istanbul.

But there is more to America than size. There is variety. When an American says 'Home' he may be thinking of an old farmhouse half-hidden behind the snowdrifts along a New England mountain road, or he may be thinking of an adobe (dried clay) house in California with banana palms and yucca growing in the garden. 'Cold weather' to him



IN AMERICAN EYES ENGLAND IS A TINY COUNTRY.

may mean a temperature of 30° F. or it may mean 30° below zero. From his doorstep he may see the forest-clad Eastern mountains, with their waterfalls and green valleys; he may look forth upon the pleasant farmlands of Iowa, which resemble in places the gently rolling English lowlands; or he may scan a golden sea of wheat ruffled under a high bright sky.

But, although the climate and topography of one section of the United States may resemble that of Spain, in another that of Norway, there is less variety within the bounds of a small area than there is in England. Undoubtedly this is one reason why the Americans dislike walking as a form of recreation. An American cannot ordinarily include in a day's walking, or even a week's walking, hills and lowlands, views of the sea, woodland and field, as the British frequently can. Even an Englishman would feel discouraged if, having waited on a summer day until the temperature fell to a mere eighty, he set out along a dusty country lane bordered by unfenced fields of wheat extending one mile, five miles, ten miles, with only an occasional farmstead to break the monotony of the scene. Straight roads, high-powered motor-cars, habitual speeding—these are in part

the result of the fact that the American has to travel a long distance before he can begin to enjoy a change in the landscape.

Although American scenery may be monotonous, the climate is not. Most of the country enjoys sharp seasonal changes. In the summer, the hot winds blow northward from the Equator, blocked by no natural barrier because the great mountain ranges run from north to south. In the winter, the country is similarly swept by bitterly cold gales from the Arctic. Many Americans are, therefore, accustomed to annual changes in temperature twice as great as those experienced in the British Isles.

These violent changes, disheartening for gardeners, have a very stimulating effect on American life as a whole. During the hot summer the American is forced to relax, to work more slowly than usual, to eat less, to reduce the normal pace of his existence. In the autumn, the first bright frosty days are as refreshing as a cold dip after a game of tennis. Winter brings snow and the shimmering curtains of the aurora borealis; in the cities the snow piles up drearily in dirty heaps until it is carried away, but there is little fog and the sun, though paler than in July or August, shines very nearly as brilliantly.

So charged with electricity is the air that one's hair crackles and snaps as it follows the comb drawn through it, and a favourite game among schoolchildren consists merely of sliding out of their seats and touching someone with their fingers in order to give him a slight electric shock. In such a climate one feels capable of any amount of exertion, and during the winter few Americans follow the advice implied in Ben Franklin's dictum: "Early to bed, early to rise, Makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise."

The Englishman who has lived in New York only can no more claim a knowledge of the real United States than can the American living in London a full knowledge of England. Its situation on the edge of the country rather than in the centre makes New York less typically American than many cities. To the average Middle Westerner, New

York is synonymous with Wall Street finance and Fifth Avenue fashions. He would like to see the view from the one hundred and second storey of the Empire State building and to visit the Radio City Music Hall for a glimpse of the famous precision ballet known as the Rockettes. But he has ordinarily no desire to live in New York or to attempt to earn a living there. His loyalty is to Chicago or Detroit, St. Louis or Cleveland. His local newspaper carries hardly more news of New York than it does of London ; half of the programmes he hears on his radio originate in the local studios. New Yorkers say with some truth that where New York goes the rest of the country will follow ; but the rest of the country sees itself not following but marching firmly ahead on its own path, while New York tries vainly to lead it astray.

Americans have a very short memory, as may be expected of a people who have acquired the habit of always looking ahead rather than back. Many of the tourists who used to boast proudly in England of the truly fine highways which now bind together the four corners of their country would be astonished to learn that, only seventy years ago, roads throughout the country were appallingly bad. The macadamized roads which were in use in England were unknown even in the eastern United States, and passengers in stage-coaches were jolted violently from side to side, up to the roof and down to the floor, in their progress along the ' corduroys ' or roads made by laying logs transversely, the foot-wide spaces between them being filled with soft mud. Indeed, in the present era of super-highways country roads in America are not so good as those in England, and in some parts of the country the word ' corduroy ' as used in reference to roads is by no means obsolete.

With easy land travel so recent a development, it is not difficult to understand why sectional loyalties are so strong in the United States. The mountain ranges separating the East from the Middle West and the Middle West from the Far West made economic differences between one region and another as well as historic ones. The division of the

country into Slave States and Free at the time of the Civil War (1861-65) left another set of loyalties and of prejudices which have only recently faded away.

The difficulty of accurately defining the various regions into which the United States can be divided has been pointed out by the authors of several recent books on America. Americans themselves show a lack of strict logic in nomenclature which ought to commend itself to English people who call uplands 'downs' and whose universities hold 'May Week' in June. The states generally included in the area called the Middle West (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and possibly Missouri) are all in the eastern half of the country, and the group as a whole is, therefore, neither 'Middle' nor 'West.' Another anomaly concerns the region known as the South—sometimes the Old South or the Deep South. The area so designated is only the south-east. Virginia and Kentucky are considered 'South,' but southern California is 'West.'

Once these irregularities are understood and the reader is prepared to meet with differences of opinion as to the precise delineation of any given section, it is possible to glance at each region and, without attempting to make a careful geographical study of it, nevertheless obtain a rough idea of the country as a whole.

First of all, there is New England, the group of states north and east of New York, the region settled by the Puritans who landed on her 'stern and rock-bound' coast in 1620. Three centuries of clearing rocks out of the soil have made little improvement in the land and farming is extremely difficult. However, there is a great abundance of water-power and, therefore, a considerable amount of industry. The Green Mountains of Vermont and the White Mountains of New Hampshire, and the varied coastline attract visitors from every section of the country. Some of them become permanent residents after buying and converting into a modern residence one of the delightful old Georgian farmhouses that are built among the hills. The oldest schools and universities in the United States are found

in New England, many of them considered to be among the finest in the country.

In the early days of the nation's history, the influence of Boston, the metropolis of the area, was undisputed. Hers was the narrow, self-righteous puritanical but cultured outlook which is what people mean when they speak of 'New Englandism,' and New Englandism was the leaven which leavened the whole country. But her years of glory are gone, although she continues to pride herself on being, if not the hub of the universe, as her citizens once boasted, at least the most English city in America. Her accent is indeed like that of the English, but a large number of her citizens are Irish and there are said to be seventy or eighty thousand Lithuanians in the town.

New England is only a half—and the smaller half at that—of the industrial North-East, which also includes the large states of New York and Pennsylvania as well as New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware and West Virginia. Although there are dairy farms in New York and Pennsylvania, agriculture is not important, and the *per capita* income of the area is consequently much higher than that of the United States as a whole. Philadelphia, the Quaker city founded by William Penn, still has to some degree the characteristics of calm and orderliness which he bequeathed to it. It used to be said that in New York the question invariably asked about a young lady was, "Is she rich?", in Boston, "Is she clever?" and in Philadelphia, "Is she pretty?"

The second city of Pennsylvania is Pittsburgh, somewhat smaller than Manchester in size, and celebrated as the 'smoky city' because of its great steel-smelting plants.

Directly to the west lie the states of the Middle West, which share a history and an economic outlook quite different from that of the people east of the mountains. Lying in the great valley drained by the Mississippi River which runs southward from the Canadian border to the French Creole city of New Orleans on the Gulf of Mexico, these states were first settled by malcontents from New England who found farming there too difficult. They

were admitted to the Union in accordance with the terms laid down in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, during the period from 1803 to 1858. It was of this period that the historian, James Truslow Adams, writes, "No one can even estimate the vast numbers of Americans from the innumerable countrysides, villages, towns and cities who in these years shifted westward from wherever they started. Michigan, which had a population of 31,000 in 1830, held 212,000 ten years later." Easterners and immigrants alike made the journey down the Erie Canal which joined the Hudson River and Lake Erie, ducking their heads and even throwing themselves flat on the deck as their boat passed under the numerous low bridges across the 'Big Ditch.' Entire families travelled down the rivers, often on rafts on which they had loaded all their worldly goods, including a cow and a couple of pigs.

Until the last years of the nineteenth century, the Middle West remained an agricultural area, and as such often found reason for distrusting the activities of the financiers in the industrial North-East. With the growth of the steel trade and the development of motor-car manufacturing, the economic character of the states east of the Mississippi changed. Nevertheless, agriculture remains an important source of livelihood.

It was in 1833 that the Widow O'Leary's cow kicked over the lamp and so started the fire which completely destroyed the prosperous but jerry-built little town of Chicago. A hundred years later, in the shadow of the skyscrapers that had risen along the shore of Lake Michigan, her citizens celebrated their 'Century of Progress' with a gigantic World's Fair that set the pace for the even greater ones to come.

The unsavoury reputation of the gangsters (now defunct), the greater fame of New York's magnificent skyline, and the fact that Chicago's stockyards have been advertised in song and story make it difficult for anyone not knowing Chicago to realize the beauty which the city possesses. In the summer, a cool wind blowing off the lake makes the

heat more bearable in Chicago than it is in the country districts to the south. On the other hand, a March blizzard is sufficiently interesting an experience to be worth enduring once, but once in a lifetime is quite enough for a person of ordinary sensibilities.

Chicago does not challenge New York's position as the artistic and theatrical centre of the country, but she is nonetheless a worthy cultural capital for the Middle West. Chicago University ranks with Harvard University and Columbia University in New York as one of the three finest in the United States, and Northwestern University in nearby Evanston is also one of the more important foundations of learning.

Fourth in size among American cities and situated on the United States-Canadian border less than three hundred miles north-east of Chicago is Detroit, centre of the motor-car industry. Intensely loyal to their 'home-town,' Detroiters have as little fondness for Chicago as Chicagoans have for New York. Historically Detroit comes first, for the French established a settlement there in the seventeenth century.

Cleveland, Youngstown and Cincinnati in Ohio, St. Louis in Missouri, Milwaukee in Wisconsin, Des Moines in the state of Iowa, and the Twin Cities—Minneapolis and St. Paul in Minnesota—these are the remaining industrial and commercial centres of the upper Mississippi Valley.

The Old South in reality and in romance occupies a place in the American scheme which is different from that held by any other region. Its attitudes are shaped by such factors as the predominance of agriculture and the consequent political opposition to the industrial North, the proportion of Negroes in the population, and the consciousness of having been on the losing side during the war between the states. Its *per capita* income is far below the national average of either the United States or Britain (the annual figure for 1935 was \$253 in Georgia). Negroes and whites earn equally little in many occupations. Until twenty-five or thirty years ago hookworm was a dreadful scourge.

Even to-day poverty and malnutrition encourage the spread of malaria and typhus.

Many Northerners are unaware of the degree to which living conditions in the South differ from their own. Proud of the political equality granted American citizens by the Constitution, they do not know how effectively state laws in the South have disenfranchised thousands of Negroes and poor whites alike. The colour prejudice in the South is still so strong that states which are among the poorest in the country support two educational systems, and separate recreational and transportation facilities for the two races. In the North the colour prejudice is much weaker.

In striking contrast to the poor white's struggle for a bare existence was the spacious life led by the plantation owners in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the golden age of Southern civilization. This period gave rise to the popular romantic conception of the South which is so remote from the reality. Long before the era of the Civil War and the so-called Reconstruction Period, with their destruction and disruption, the Southerners, moving westward away from the coast, built charming new houses in imitation of the family seats which had been built in Virginia or South Carolina early in the eighteenth century. There, surrounded by the broad acres of their enormous estates, they enjoyed a leisurely, patriarchal life. Whereas the Northerner had become more and more interested in getting rich, and had taken to his heart the slogan, "Time is money," the cotton planter, living far from cities and without close neighbours, saw no virtue in punctuality and no sense in hustling.

The similarity between the life in the South and life on the great estates in England naturally bred a greater sympathy between the landed gentry on either side of the Atlantic than existed between the English and the Northerners. Until the Civil War, children on the great plantations were frequently taught at home by English tutors, and sons were often sent back to Oxford or Cambridge to finish their education. Even to-day, in houses

grown shabby, on estates that have shrunk to a tenth of their original size, can be found exquisite linen and silver, china and furniture brought home from England during that period and the more carefully treasured during the barren years that followed because so many of the things that made life pleasant had gone.

Within the area referred to as the South are several smaller regions which have strongly marked characteristics of their own. The cities of Savannah, Charleston, Atlanta and Richmond share not only Civil War memories but a colonial background dating from the arrival of Gilbert and Raleigh. St. Augustine, Florida, was settled by the Spaniards in 1513. Westward, in Alabama, lies Birmingham (pronounced Birming-ham), which has become one of the great industrial cities, with vast smelting plants. And along the lower Mississippi lies the state of Louisiana, which was originally settled by the French who, in 1699, arrived at the present site of New Orleans, where they killed a buffalo, erected a cross, and started a settlement. Their numbers were increased in the thirty years following 1760 by the arrival of some four hundred thousand French Canadians who had been expelled by the British from Acadia in Nova Scotia. To-day their descendants are known as 'Cajuns.'

New Orleans, like St. Augustine and Quebec, has great charm for Americans because of its Old World atmosphere. In the older sections of the city, the architecture is a mixture of eighteenth-century French and Spanish. Before the construction of the Erie Canal and of the railroads which joined the East and the Middle West, the latter shipped most of its produce down the Mississippi and New Orleans rivalled New York in importance as a seaport.

The best-known product which has emanated from New Orleans, although few people realize that it came from there, is the type of music to which Chicago in 1915 gave the name 'Jazz.' Negro funerals gave bands opportunities for playing both 'blues' and 'hot' music, the former on the way to the burial, and the latter on the return march. 'Spasm'

bands, playing by ear, performed ragtime in the streets of the French Quarter but were unknown elsewhere, until in 1914 the first of many jazz bands from New Orleans went north to Chicago and thence to New York. However, not all citizens of New Orleans were proud to take the credit for originating what they called "this particular form of musical vice."

The landscapes of the South are as different from the rocky pastures of New England as the green New England mountains are from the tawny deserts of the West. Grey Spanish moss drapes its veils over the 'live-oak' trees. At the mouth of the Mississippi River the vegetation becomes semi-tropical, and a Louisiana estate-owner once won a bet that he could provide a complete dinner, fit for a gourmet, without using anything which had not been produced on his own land. The dinner included wines and coffee, and even the spices were home-grown.

Cotton, rice, sugar-cane, tobacco, sweet potatoes, peanuts and numerous fruits are the principal crops of Southern agriculture.

The Great Plains region, the Rocky Mountain states, and the South-West together make up a vast area, sparsely inhabited, and, like the South, with a *per capita* income below the American and British national averages. These are the states in the 'Dust-bowl,' so called because during the prolonged drought of the 1930's the top soil was sucked up by great winds from the west and scattered in a fine dust over the eastern half of the country, leaving behind a sub-soil that was useless for cultivation. Archibald MacLeish, in a moving commentary on a collection of photographs taken by the Farm Security Administration, writes of the bewildered Dust-bowl farmers, dependent now on seasonal jobs, picking peas in California, gathering melons in Colorado, working in the beet fields of Montana. They were the men who once thought that liberty was guaranteed by the ownership of land—land on which they could do what they wanted with no thought for anyone else. Now that the land has gone, they are beginning to wonder

"if there's liberty a man can mean that's men, not land."

A state with a unique history is Utah, which was settled in 1847 by the Mormons or Latter-Day Saints. No one can travel through the barren wastelands that lie to the south of Salt Lake City and then come upon the richly cultivated farmlands surrounding the state capital without feeling sincere admiration for the Mormon colonists who by their labours "made the desert blossom."

Before Utah became the forty-fifth state in the Union, in 1896, she was ruled by Brigham Young, whose word was absolute law. His position was looked upon with severe disfavour by many Americans, and eventually the Mormon acceptance of polygamy was made the excuse for measures which were intended not only to stamp out polygamy itself but to break the power of the leading 'Saints.' Since to take as many wives as a man could support was regarded as a religious duty rather than a pleasure, not more than 2 or 3 per cent. of the Mormons were polygamists, but this number naturally included all the leaders. In the 'eighties, Congress in Washington passed a law forbidding polygamy, with the result that the Mormon leaders were obliged to spend most of their time in hiding while the Federal troops hunted for what they called 'polygs' and 'cohabs.' If the Mormons are now as monogamous as the Methodists, it is not because they believe that Brigham Young was wrong, but because they prefer to live in accordance with the laws of the temporal power. Far from being looked upon as an immoral people, they are now known as a prosperous and puritanical folk whose religion forbids them to take any stimulants, not excepting tea, coffee or tobacco.

Texas is the largest state in the Union, with an area three times that of England and Scotland combined. First owned by Spain, then by Mexico, Texas was for nearly ten years an independent nation before it was admitted to the Union in 1845. Although it is larger in area than pre-war France, which had a population of over forty millions, Texas has

less than six million inhabitants. The oil wells of that state and of neighbouring Oklahoma pour forth liquid gold, while the cotton fields and cattle ranches are a less spectacular form of wealth.

Beyond the mountains to the west lies what is still to many Americans the promised land—California. Second in size among the states, it has a more even climate and a greater variety of scenery than any other state. Superficially, it seems to have fewer natives than any other state; Californians are people who have moved there to escape from the cold winters and hot summers inland, to plant orange groves, to get into the movies, or to build airplanes. A fruit farm is invariably known as a ‘ranch,’ whether it be half an acre or a thousand acres in size, but there are comparatively few small ones, and most fruit farms and market gardens which produce winter crops for the rest of the country are operated by large concerns.

Los Angeles and San Francisco are the great rivals of the Pacific Coast. Los Angeles long ago determined that she would become the largest city in the West, as indeed she has, after having included within her city limits many outlying towns.

Doubtless Los Angeles will learn in time that growing big is not synonymous with growing up. Meanwhile, her heterogeneous collection of suburbs includes a disappointingly prosaic Hollywood full of would-be film stars—shop-girls with elaborate hair-dos and careful make-up, and garage mechanics whose smiles are packed with virile charm.

Although San Francisco and the city which was originally named El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de Los Angeles de Porciucula were founded by the Spaniards at approximately the same time (San Francisco in 1776, Los Angeles in 1781), the latter remained a village long after the gold rush of 1849 had made ‘Frisco a thriving boom-town. San Francisco therefore gives the impression of being an older city. Her population is only half as large as that of Los Angeles, but her situation on one of the finest harbours in

the world gives her some right to the title 'Queen of the West.'

From San Francisco to Seattle, Washington, extends a broad highway along what must surely be one of the finest scenic panoramas bordering any highway in the world. Nearly a thousand miles in length, the road passes first through small southern-looking towns with gardens full of magnificent flowers,—bougainvillea, wistaria, begonias,—then through a stand of great redwood trees, and finally reaching the mountainous coast, follows it to the mouth of the Columbia River. Here, in the north-western corner of the United States, a comparatively even temperature and rain 'thirteen months of the year' give the inhabitants what they proudly call an English climate. Portland and Seattle are important manufacturing and exporting cities.

No city in the North-West was founded before the nineteenth century. As one travels northward through California one leaves behind Spanish names—Mariposa, Montecito, Palo Alto—and one comes to towns with Indian names—Seattle, Walla Walla, Hoquiam—or to the ubiquitous Anglo-Saxon Newports, Redmonds and Reedvilles. But here and there in this new and sparsely populated country are names which breathe the spirit of hope in which the United States was settled. Here are Paradise Valley, Sweet Home, Liberty, and Golden City. To the highlands have come in recent years many of the farmers who were blown out of the Dust-bowl, farmers who are once again earning a decent living for their families. 'Sunnyside,' they call their village, or simply 'Friend.' In these names and in these towns the American dream still lives.

Many Americans have a Small Town Background—How They Live in the Small Towns—Some Colonies of One Nationality—The Americans and the English have Different Views of the Countryside—The Important Motor-car and Other Ways of Travelling

JUST as the average American likes to think that the United States is governed by men who have risen from life in a log-cabin or its equivalent to positions of importance, he likes to believe that the typical American lives in a small town or on a farm. (He uses the phrase 'small town' as the Englishman uses the word 'provinces,' to mean everything that lies outside the great cities. A small town may have a population of a hundred thousand; it may have a population of five hundred.)

Neither opinion is based on fact. Abraham Lincoln was the outstanding exception to the rule that great Americans were not born in log cabins, and the typical American is more likely to live in Kansas City or Pittsburgh than in a hamlet like Social Center, Georgia. Half of the population of the state of New York lives in New York City, half the population of Illinois in Chicago, one-sixth of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, a quarter of Michigan in Detroit. American civilization is, therefore, an urban civilization rather than a rural one.

It is true, nevertheless, that the man in the street may be a small-town person at heart, even though he has lived in the city for the last twenty years. The population of the great cities has grown so rapidly as a result of the industrialization of what was not long ago a truly agricultural nation that probably the majority of urban dwellers of middle age were brought up in rural areas. Even the ones who don't go back for an annual visit carry with them nostalgic memories of swimmin'-hole and picnics.

The pervasive influence of the small town on the lives of

millions of city-dwellers is helping to preserve the democracy of frontier days long after the disappearance of the social conditions in which that democracy was born. In the small town there are no class distinctions. After graduating from high school, Jack Nelson goes to work in the factory while his pal, Bob Thomas, attends the university and becomes a prominent lawyer. The intimacy between them is broken but, for the length of their lives, they are 'Jack' and 'Bob' to each other.

Such a relationship is harder to preserve in the great cities in which the extremes of wealth and poverty are greater and classes tend to segregate themselves. The small proportion of children who are sent to private schools are almost entirely the children of parents who live wholly or mainly in the city. As the populations of the large cities lose their contact with the rural areas which they half-scornfully, half-affectionately call 'the sticks,' it may be that American democracy will lose some of its finest qualities.

Even an American who was brought up in a small town which was invariably described in the local newspaper as the 'finest little city in the world' must admit that American small towns are much alike. Except in those border areas where English or Spanish settlers erected churches or houses which have become historical landmarks, there is nothing worth going out of one's way to see. Instead of the cluster of skyscrapers rising out of the wilderness of which a foreigner might expect an American small town to consist, he will usually find a sprawling collection of one-family wooden houses, each set in its own garden, the whole settlement bisected by a Main Street lined with business buildings. On one end of the town the houses are larger and more pretentious in style, and may be built of brick or stucco. The most striking feature of the English landscape, the church spire, may appear at first sight to be completely missing, not because there are no churches, but because there are so many of them. A village with a population of eight hundred will maintain three churches of three denominations, and each of the churches will be of

necessity a small and unimposing structure. In larger towns the church spires stand out above the surrounding roof-tops, but nowhere in America does one see the great bulk of a cathedral rising over the roof-tops of the city as the great cathedrals of Europe do.

Whereas the churches are numerous and small, the school is usually the largest and, therefore, the most impressive structure in a town. With the improvement in highways and the use of motor transport, the little one-roomed red schoolhouse of American romance has almost disappeared and from far and wide school buses now gather the children who attend the large 'consolidated' or 'central' school. The building is the source of much pride to the community; its situation is often the finest in the town. The grounds, wherever possible, are planted as lawns and gardens—and plentifully bestrewn with signs: 'Please do not step on the grass.' Part of the space available is, of course, used as a playground.

The old English squire or the county families have no equivalents in American life. The patriarchal attitudes of the English gentry have never been accepted except with regard to the Negroes. One man may be richer or better educated or better known than anyone else in his community. He may be one of the socially elect. He may own half the town. But other people neither expect nor receive charity from him. If his wife, in lady-of-the-manor fashion, carries soup to the sick, the latter return the favour by sending her a pot of home-made cranberry jelly. It is true that there often exists a country-club society composed of people who can afford to join the country club and who possess whatever other qualifications membership demands of them. Fees are sometimes very high, and particularly in the older communities, people who could afford them may be banned for some other reason. But, in most places, belonging to the country-club set depends chiefly on being able to afford it, and the group thus formed is fluid, with old members dropping out as taxes rise or investments fail, and new ones coming in as their incomes grow.

For a few Americans, the country club takes the place of the English "pub," but there is no real equivalent to a "pub" in American life. A Puritan conscience forbids some Americans to centre their social life around liquor, but many enjoy a glass of wine or a cocktail in their homes with friends. Taverns and saloons exist, but they are strictly for men only, and the cocktail lounge which has made its appearance as an adjunct to a hotel lobby since the repeal of the Prohibition Act is hardly cosy enough or cheap enough to attract working people. But the ordinary working man does not expect his pint a day any more than the middle class expects sherry before dinner. The average American likes to celebrate as much as anyone else, but when he goes out to meet his friends he thinks not so much of a glass of beer as of a soft drink, an ice-cream soda or a cup of coffee down at the corner drug-store.

But generalizations can easily be proved wrong in any single locality. In towns which have been settled largely by people of one nationality, local customs have sprung up which may not exist elsewhere. American towns are never purely English nor purely German nor purely Russian in origin, but throughout the country are to be found little colonies of people of the same race who settled together because a few came first and their friends followed, or because the surrounding countryside reminded them of home, or because they are suited by temperament to the work available.

So in the Middle West there are towns where three-fourths of the inhabitants are Swedes or Germans who found the rolling farmland similar to agricultural areas in the old country. In the North, the Finns have settled in the wooded lake country where farming is difficult and the winter is long, but both are as in Finland. Cornishmen and Welshmen went to the mining districts in America, the Portuguese fishermen settled on the New England seaboard, Italians from Sicily and Naples remained in New York, while the Genoese crossed the country to the West Coast.

The vast majority of Americans look to the land rather than to the sea for their fortunes. Until the war brought U.S. Navy recruiting campaigns and sudden evidence to every citizen of the importance of the navy, the average schoolboy was far more eager to travel by car than by ship, and if he lived inland, knew very little about the sea. Two of the nation's minor heroes, John Paul Jones and Admiral Perry, commanders who defeated the British, were sailors, but the greatest—Washington, Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Generals Grant and Lee—were all men of the land.

It was because many of the people who came to America turned first to the land for the wealth of which they dreamed that Americans have only recently learned to find in nature a spiritual satisfaction the value of which could not be reckoned in dollars and cents. Too many advertising hoardings still destroy the beauty of the open countryside; too many towns are still trying to grow a few 'shade trees' to take the place of the vast forests that were heedlessly cut down and burned when the land was cleared.

But the money-grubbing era is now past. The whole country understands the importance of conservation and follows with interest the progress of the work being done to restore the soil and preserve the forests.

Although the American has learned to enjoy Nature, he likes to do so in comfort. If the South Downs were in the United States, there would be a broad concrete highway running along the edge, with parking spaces and picnic tables immediately at hand. No one would have to walk a step to see the view. Climate and distance have so discouraged the pedestrian who would commune with Nature that the only form of hiking that he knows is hitch-hiking.

Hitch-hiking is, indeed, the accepted means of travel for those who have little money to spend. Girls and boys working their way through college 'thumb' their way home for the Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter holidays, and under ordinary conditions consider themselves unlucky if in travelling six hundred miles they have to walk as many as ten. Migratory farm-labourers, some of whom may be

1 university students working during their long summer vacation, hitch-hike from the hop-fields of Oregon to the wheat-fields of North Dakota. Destitute families cross the continent, looking for a new home on the way.

As is well known, the motor-car is the favourite means of travel in the United States. The mechanically minded who know what they are doing can ordinarily buy workable second-hand cars for as little as five pounds. Petrol and motor oil are very cheap; the usual price of high-test petrol is less than a shilling a gallon; in 1941 it sold at eighteen cents a gallon in New York, and for as little as twelve cents a gallon in the oil-well area of Texas. Many boys and girls learn to drive when they are fourteen or fifteen years old and the rules of the road are taught in school.

The result is that nowhere does the average American appear to better advantage than at the steering-wheel. The high accident rate in the United States is caused less by lack of skill in driving than by such factors as the winter weather and the American habit of laying railroads across important highways with neither barriers nor watchmen to warn the sleepy driver of the approaching train.

Competing for the patronage of those who do not travel by car, long-distance buses, railways and air lines offer excellent services between large cities. The buses are cheapest, some of the transcontinental lines offering circular return tickets for long journeys at a cost of a ha'penny a mile. Such buses travel from New York to Chicago in twenty-six hours, and their equipment includes large luggage compartments built under the floor, seats with backs that can be lowered for sleeping, and extra pillows. On most of the lines, young stewards or stewardesses see to the comfort of the passengers.

A transcontinental train is an impressive sight, for although it travels no more rapidly than an English express, it is larger and heavier. The average fare is a penny a mile, with an additional charge for a berth in a Pullman. Dressing in a berth requires considerable agility, but can be avoided by the use of the dressing-rooms, one for men and

one for women, at either end of the Pullman carriage. Express trains are now equipped with shower-baths and are air-conditioned so that ventilation does not demand open windows.

Local trains in America are as capable of erratic behaviour as local trains are elsewhere.

While in many countries civil aviation has ceased entirely because of the war, it is still an important part of the transport system in the United States. In spite of the hazards of flight over the Rocky Mountains, regular services are maintained between the large cities from San Francisco to New York. Powerful beacons on the mountain peaks guide night pilots to their destinations and provide a strangely thrilling spectacle for the motorist who loses sight of them, sees them, and loses them again as his road twists and climbs through the passes far below.

Rivers down which the English, Spanish and French explorers made their way and along which the country was first settled, are no longer important so far as passenger transport is concerned, although they are now carrying a greater tonnage of freight than ever before. Thousands of tons of iron ore are shipped from mines to smelting plants by way of the Great Lakes, and in 1941 two thousand barges were travelling up and down the Mississippi. But steamboats crowded with cheering passengers no longer race down the river, whistles blowing and captains roaring in the excitement of a contest which sometimes continued until a boiler exploded.

*Nine out of Ten American Children go to State Schools—
Twelve Years of State School Training—Co-education—Dis-
cipline—Practical Interests in the Curriculum—The Move-
ment to Train Interested Citizens—Career Guidance—Sport
and Recreation—"Commencement" Exercises mark the End
of School Life*

MORE than 90 per cent. of American children between the ages of six and seventeen attend the public (i.e. state) schools. Each of the forty-eight states has passed laws requiring children to attend school, and the determination of the school-leaving age is a matter for the state rather than the Federal government.

The control of the schools themselves is chiefly in the hands of the local school boards elected by the voters in each school district, the quality of the schools, therefore, varying from place to place. The school districts sometimes include cities like New York or Chicago, sometimes a section of land six miles square with a population consisting of two families.

The schools are financed largely by local taxation, the state governments maintaining 'equalization funds' which are used to bring the amounts of money available to schools in the poorest districts up to an agreed minimum. To increase the size of the school districts so that each contained a rich and a poor area would equalize conditions even more, but voters in fortunate areas show little inclination to share with neighbouring districts the wealth which under the present system is available only to the local school.

In addition to the public schools, there are in the United States private schools of many types. The parochial schools established by the Roman Catholic church are usually modelled on the public schools. In order that their graduates may be qualified to enter colleges and universities on the same basis as graduates of the public schools, they

invite inspection by state and other investigators, and their work complies with the standards set up for the public schools.

Private or semi-private co-educational schools are sometimes established in connection with the teachers' training departments of great universities. But many private schools are not co-educational. Those in the East, some of them founded in the seventeenth century, are usually modelled to some extent on the English Public Schools, and have even in times past supported school cricket teams. In other parts of the country, boys' schools are usually military academies at which the boys wear uniforms of military style and are trained by officers of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps. However, few of them adopt the Army as a career, and their years at Staunton or St. John's are usually the preparation for college or university.

Boarding-schools for girls are similar to English schools except that they provide more comfort. There is less zeal for higher education than in many public schools; a girl who has been 'finished' soon makes her bow to society as a debutante at one of the balls which in America take the place of a presentation at Court, and she is thereupon launched on a social career.

Generally speaking, private schools impinge so little on the consciousness of the average middle or working-class American that before Mr. Roosevelt became a candidate for the Presidency there were probably millions of Americans who had never heard of Groton, President Roosevelt's old school, usually referred to as the Eton or Harrow of the United States.

Traditionally, Americans believe in the education of the masses. That they are far from achieving their goal of universal education, however, is revealed by the statement of an official of the Institute of Adult Education that in 1941 there were approximately 16,000,000 illiterates in the United States, a figure much larger than that given in the census returns or as a result of other investigations in which people who could sign their names were able to conceal

from the investigator their inability to read or write anything else.

Whereas in some states the school year is nine and one-half months long and the average child attends school 170 days per year, in other states it is only six months. In the year 1935-36 New York state spent \$134.14 (£26 16s.) per school child; Arkansas, \$24.55 (£4 18s.). As a measure of accomplishment, a high school diploma may mean the achievement of a good elementary and secondary school training in a progressive and well-equipped institution, or it may mean that a child has picked up only a smattering of knowledge from a series of ill-paid and overworked teachers in a building on which hardly a penny has been spent in years.

Americans usually send their children to local schools. They have long marvelled at the fortitude of the British, many of whom, even before the days of evacuation, sent very young children to school away from home. The average American mother takes entire care of her children herself until at the age of five they start to attend the kindergarten for half a day. At six, a child enters the first grade—the first of the twelve forms through which he must pass to obtain a high school diploma. Average progress is made at the rate of a grade a year; gifted children are occasionally allowed to skip a half-year's work, but as many educationalists believe that it is harmful to a child's social development to move him into a group of children several years older than himself, even the exceptionally brilliant child is unlikely to be promoted out of turn more than twice in his twelve years at school.

Children in the first six grades are not required to sit for examinations in order to receive monthly or final marks on the report cards which they periodically carry home to their parents; but after a child enters the Junior High School, which includes the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades, the marks on his report card are determined to a considerable extent by examination results. No examination covers the work of more than one year; usually it

covers only that done in a 'semester' or half-year term. Except in the Eastern States, where the student must pass the College Entrance Board examination, which corresponds to Matric. in England but is somewhat easier, in order to enter a college or university, there is no comprehensive examination at the end of the secondary school period. University entrance requirements are solely that a student has received a high school diploma at an approved school, and that his studies have included three years of satisfactory work in English, two in Mathematics, Social Science, and perhaps Natural Science and a foreign language.

One of the features of modern education in the United States has been the use of standard intelligence tests by means of which educationalists attempt to measure the mental age of a child. It is their hope that when they have discovered that a child's achievement in school is not so high as can be reasonably expected of a child with his mental ability, they will be able to trace the cause of his maladjustment, remove it, and thus encourage full mental development. However, the tests are often administered by untrained teachers rather than by expert examiners as is essential if accurate results are to be obtained, and they are, therefore, of little value. Most of the tests now in use measure only certain types of intelligence and place a premium on speed and accuracy rather than on depth of thought or on originality.

State schools are co-educational, boys and girls attending the same classes from the kindergarten to the twelfth grade. The majority of elementary school teachers are women, but among teachers of secondary school children the sexes are fairly evenly represented. In old-fashioned one-room country schools, a few of which still exist, one teacher instructs children of different ages, crowding into a single day fifteen or more short lessons. But the movement toward the consolidation of school districts and the transport of children from a wide area to a single central school has generally meant an increase in what Americans, typically, called 'departmentalization,' the teaching of each

subject by a person who is specially qualified in that field.

There is less formal discipline in an American than in an English school. The teacher's desk is not on a platform, students do not rise when the teacher enters the room, and classes are conducted as informally as conversation among a large group of friends.

As a result of the American emphasis on the practical, many things are included in the curriculum of an American school which find no place in European systems. The study of Domestic Science is frequently obligatory for girls, and the Domestic Science or, as Americans prefer to call it, the Home Economics courses, include not only training in cooking, sewing, and child care, but also dietetics, the planning of the family budget, and the use of colour and line in interior decoration and the designing of clothes. Girls of twelve ruthlessly analyse each other's good points and bad points.

Occasionally a boys' class in Manual Arts—carpentry, woodwork, welding, or electricity—leaves its benches and lathes for a month or six weeks, in order to exchange places with a class in cookery. The girls learn to drive nails and mend electric fuses, while the boys make buck-wheat cakes and learn to carve a joint. Boys' after-school cooking clubs have also proved successful, probably because boys have discovered that an all-male camping expedition during the summer holidays is not much fun unless someone knows how to cook.

Prominent in every curriculum is Social Science, including classes in citizenship and economics. Perhaps American educationalists have been too optimistic in their belief that good citizenship can be taught like mathematics or spelling; that a student who has learned about Congressional procedure and the history of the secret ballot will necessarily be a wiser man and a better citizen. Unfortunately, however necessary a knowledge of the principles and functions of government may be to a good citizen, it does not in itself make a good citizen. Often it is only too obvious

that in spite of the efforts that have been made to train high school students to keep an open mind and to think for themselves, the majority grow up to vote in strict accord with family tradition, the son of a Republican for the Republicans, and the Democrat's son for the Democrats.

Nevertheless, the citizenship training in the American school has proved its value. The schools have not turned out a race of totally disinterested and conscientious citizens, but they have given the majority of Americans a sense of responsibility, a feeling that ultimately the power of government rests with them and with all the ordinary men like them. The teaching of Social Science has prevented the spreading of a sense of helplessness among the common people, and that apathy which permits the rise to power of a demagogue like Hitler.

This is an age of experiment in educational matters, and some high schools have gone far in abandoning the traditional curriculum which was intended to prepare pupils for entering college. Even when the subjects seem the same, Latin and English, for instance, the content of the course has changed a great deal in the last twenty years. Everywhere there has been a lowering of standards to provide education suitable to the average mentality rather than to the ability of the student who is fitted by temperament and talent to go on to the university.

English courses, for instance, used always to include the study of Shakespeare; 9th graders (Freshmen) usually studied 'Julius Caesar,' 10th graders (Sophomores) 'As You Like It,' 11th graders (Juniors) 'Hamlet,' and 12th graders (Seniors) 'Macbeth.' Now it is possible for a student to study English for four years without reading Shakespeare at all. Americans feel that it is better for a child that he be allowed to develop a taste for reading, even though what he reads is not great literature, than that he be required to read things for which he is not ready, and thus be given the impression that all good literature is dull, dry, and meaningless.

Even small high schools attempt to provide both pre-

university and pre-vocational training. Students decide whether to follow an academic or a commercial course. English (literature and composition), Social Science (including American History, Civics, and Economics), Mathematics, and Physical Training are compulsory subjects.

University requirements may dictate the additional study of foreign languages, natural science, and advanced mathematics, while the requirements of a business training include typing, shorthand, office management, and book-keeping. Large schools offer other vocational training, even to classes in domestic service. A student may supplement his regular course of study with subjects chosen from other courses; many who are preparing for entrance into a university add typing and perhaps shorthand to their schedules.

Physiology and Hygiene, compulsory subjects in the elementary school, are frequently given a place in the course of study in high school, although perhaps only as a part of the physical training programme, and they are again included in the curricula at many colleges.

Efforts have been made in recent years to place on the staffs of many schools teachers who have had training in vocational guidance and personnel work. These spend most of their time in individual conferences with pupils, helping them to choose the careers for which they are suited and then to prepare for the careers they have chosen, and discussing with them other personal problems. Whether or not such counsellors are available, the American school-teacher is expected to know his students sufficiently well to be able to help them outside as well as inside the classroom.

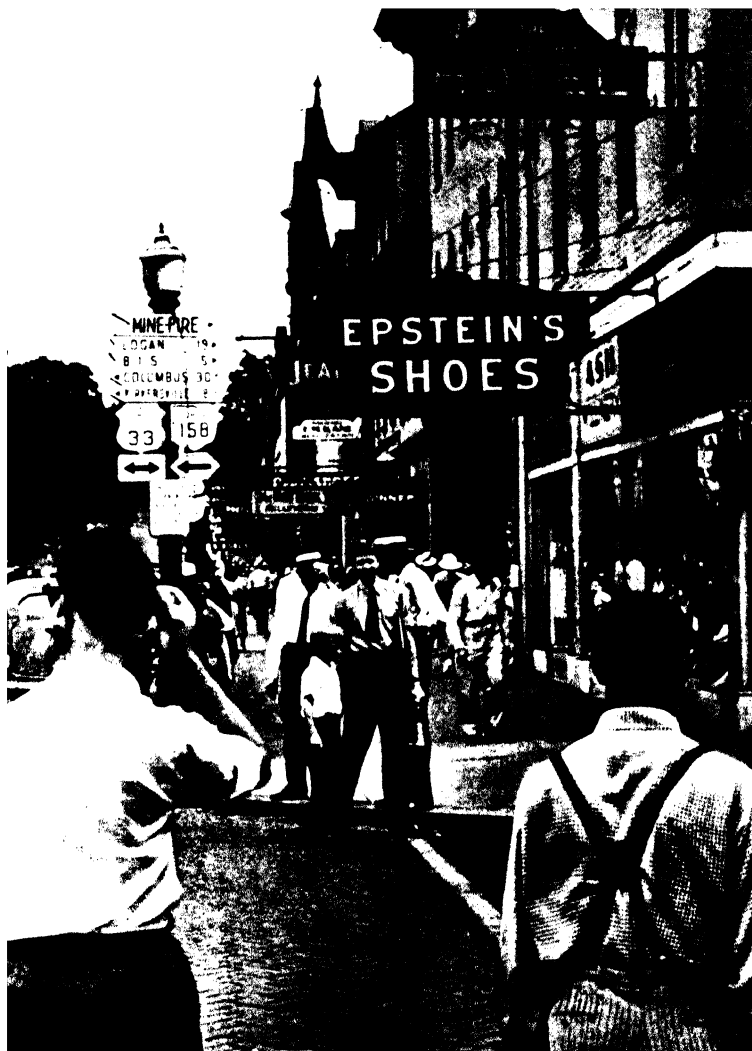
For many years, the influx into the Junior and Senior High School of boys and girls of the types which had previously dropped out of the contest in the sixth grade caused educationalists to concentrate their attention on providing material which would be easy enough and useful enough to these pupils to make attending school worth their while. Many of them had neither the desire nor

the ability to acquire a thorough understanding of the intricacies of the Latin language or of higher mathematics. For their benefit, as has been said, the Latin course was simplified, shortened, or dropped entirely. Meanwhile, the more brilliant students, for whom the curriculum had originally been planned, were neglected. Generation after generation of highly intelligent boys and girls left school trained to do only easy things, to enjoy only the mediocre, because they had never been given an opportunity to get their teeth into something difficult.

Now the pendulum has swung back in their favour. Work is often planned on the contract or project system, which gives students of varied abilities an opportunity to do work on whichever level they choose. For instance, a class in history is about to study the period of the War of Independence. A unit of work covering six weeks is outlined by the teacher, and pupils decide for themselves how much of it they wish to do. In order to obtain a mark of 'C' or 'Satisfactory,' they will read and master an assigned portion of their textbook and a small amount of reference material in the library and will supplement this study by preparing a scrapbook illustrating life in the days of George Washington, by dressing a doll in eighteenth-century costume, or by constructing a cardboard model of a house or fortress of the period. Students who want a 'B' will do the work assigned in the 'C' contract, read additional assignments, and write essays, while the 'A' contract includes work of such difficulty that only the most intelligent can attempt it.

A more recent approach to the problem of satisfying the needs of the unusually gifted child is being made in a few schools which have established ungraded rooms for children who, under special supervision, can do as advanced work as they like. Ungraded rooms have long existed for children of sub-normal intelligence who can make no progress in the ordinary class-room.

In addition to class-work, most high schools provide some extra-curricular activities. Football and basketball



By courtesy of the U.S. Farm Security Administration (Photo

Main Street, Lancaster, Ohio, in August



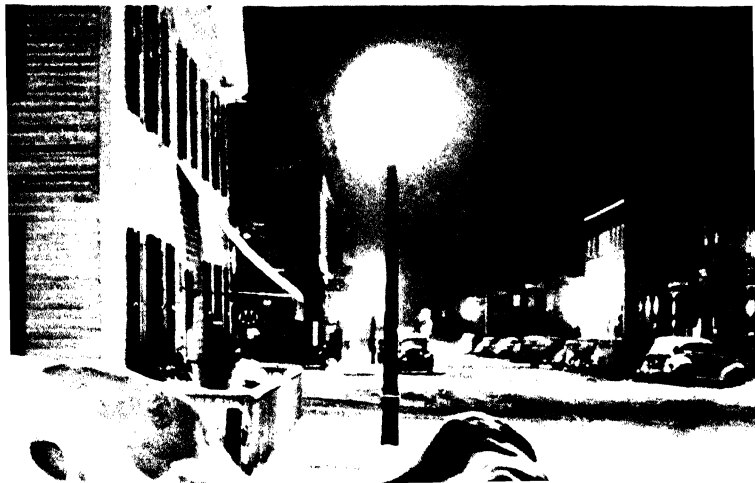
By courtesy of the U.S. Farm Security Administration (Photo, Le

(Above) A Women's Club Meeting in the Home

This is not just a tea party. There has been a lecture first, now followed by refreshments (see p. 149).

(Below) Snow in New England. March in Woodstock, Vermont

By courtesy of the U.S. Farm Security Administration (Photo, Rotbets



(a form of net-ball) are the major sports for boys, and games against rival teams are attended by townspeople as well as by school-children. Debates and debate-tournaments, in which during the course of a day teams meet opponents from three or four other schools, are popular in some parts of the country. Newspapers, literary magazines, and yearbooks are written and edited by pupils in many schools.

Those classes of students who, having entered school at the same time, eventually are graduated from high school at the same time, are highly organized, and self-government of the school as a whole is encouraged, though only to a limited extent. School strikes, when supported by public opinion, have occasionally resulted in a change of policy by local boards of education.

The culmination of the American's school career is 'Commencement,' the school-leaving ceremony. For years he has worked and played with this goal in mind. Let us attend the Commencement Exercises.

The time is any evening in the first half of June. The scene is a high school assembly hall or auditorium anywhere in the United States. On the stage are rows of empty chairs, set up in tiers if necessary; a piano stands at one side and on a table in a corner are piled the diplomas which are soon to be presented with so much ceremony to the members of the graduating class.

Below the stage, every seat in the room is occupied. It is a hot night—graduation night is always a hot night—and portly business men and plump matrons stir restlessly and fan themselves with their programmes while they wait. Down in the orchestra pit, the school orchestra, minus its most proficient members, makes a series of peculiar noises, in the midst of which a small boy, looking very frightened, rushes across the stage to put a sheet of music on the stand near the piano. The audience, led by a few young people, applauds derisively, and he disappears.

And then, suddenly, Commencement really begins. The orchestra crashes into a solemn march; the audience rises

to its feet; down the aisles come the long rows of boys and girls in their grey caps and gowns, a pink rose (the last gift of the old school) firmly pinned to each breast. Up the steps to the platform they go, the girls as lovely as young brides, although their pretty graduation dresses are hidden under the sober grey gowns, the boys looking hot and solemn and so very big in their academic garb, that parents and teachers alike gaze at them in astonishment.

The processional ends, the students collapse into their chairs and stare at the audience, who stare back, until the Salutorian of the Class steps forward to give the opening address: "Mr. Smith, Members of the School Board, Parents, and Teachers! It is my privilege to welcome you to this programme and to thank you for having made it possible for us, the members of the Class of 194-, to sit here on this platform this evening. As we look back upon the years we have spent in school——"

The Salutatory Address, traditionally made by the student whose scholastic record is second from the top, is followed by a musical interlude and then by the Valedictory Address of the star scholar. Mr. Smith, the superintendent of the local schools, introduces the visiting speaker, who urges each member of his youthful audience, "Hitch your wagon to a star," and discusses the duties of youth in a democracy. And finally the superintendent reads the list of names, and one by one, Honour students first, and the rest alphabetically, the boys and girls receive the diploma which signifies the successful completion of twelve years of study.

Now, to the Triumphal March from 'Aida', the Class of 194- marches out of the hall to hand in caps and gowns, exchange tearful farewells with teachers and classmates, and unwrap exciting graduation presents. There is no coming-of-age celebration to follow; the eighteen-year-old, whether he is going to the university or into the mines or, in time of war, into the army, feels that he has grown up when he has received his diploma.

Universities are State or Privately Controlled—Earning while Studying—Social Life at College—Athletics—The Place and Work of the Teacher

THE average mother with social ambitions for her children pins her hopes on the college or university rather than on a private school. The college or university itself may be a private institution which receives no support from public funds. Many of the best-known colleges and universities in the country were established by religious bodies, and there are hundreds of small colleges which are maintained, with some difficulty, by the members of small denominations. These cannot compete in equipment, excellence of teaching staff, or variety of courses offered, with larger institutions, and serve mainly as a stop-gap for local students who cannot go away from home to pursue their education.

The control of a private college or university is in the hands of a Board of Trustees, composed of the president of the institution and a group of 'alumni' (graduates) or past or future benefactors, who have little intimate connection with life in the college. Members of the teaching and research staff have no part in the making of final decisions.

The state universities differ in size and to some extent in quality, but their educational standards are high and students of small means can usually get as good a training at a state university as at any private university. In many cases, the work of the state universities is of outstanding excellence.

At a state university or college, no tuition fees are charged of students who live in the state, and fees for students from other states are very low. The major ex-

penses in obtaining a university education are, therefore, reduced to those of maintenance, the cost of books, and fees for joining 'campus' (school ground, but here used synonymously with 'university') organizations.

Attendance at state universities is by no means limited to students who have little money, however. While it is possible for an economical young man, who perhaps has a small job which earns him one free meal a day, to have a year at a state university for \$650 or £162 (it has undoubtedly been done on less), many a student of greater means has spent from £300 to £400 in the same space of time. At some universities it is forbidden for students to have cars, so that a certain amount of unnecessary expenditure is thus curtailed.

Because a university is made up of professional colleges—the College of Medicine, the College of Law, the Liberal Arts College—each of which offers courses of study leading to a degree, the words 'college' and 'university' are used as synonyms in the United States. This fact explains the story of the American tourist in Oxford who stopped a passer-by and inquired the way to "the college."

The degrees of Bachelor of Arts, Science, Literature, Philosophy, Music, or Education are usually obtained in four years; a Master's degree requires an additional year of study, and the degree of Doctor of Philosophy the equivalent of two more years of study and the writing of a thesis. The degree of Bachelor of Medicine does not exist in America; a medical course requires six years of study followed by a year's internship or residence in a hospital, and the degree given is Doctor of Medicine. The study of dentistry also leads to a doctor's degree, and an American dentist is addressed as Dr. So-and-So.

Life at college is very different from the Hollywood representation of it. While there are experimental colleges of many types, each trying to free the student from the routine of required attendance at set lectures daily, most institutions demand that something like fifteen hours a week be spent at lectures, quiz periods, or in the science

lab. Each hour so spent is supposed to call for two hours of preparation in private.

However, many students spend twenty or thirty hours a week in earning the money with which to pay their expenses. Men students can usually be trusted to relax their efforts (i.e. sleep during lectures) if the strain is too much for them physically, but over-conscientious girls sometimes go on until they collapse. Earning while studying is not limited to those who need money; at some colleges almost every student has tried his hand at a job of some sort, and even at such a university as Yale, which occupies a position similar to that held by Cambridge, one student out of three earns part of his expenses. Antioch College in Ohio has become nationally known for its effort to prevent nervous breakdowns resulting from overwork, by arranging that working at jobs should alternate with monthly periods at study, each job being held by two students working alternatively.

From the first week of his arrival when, at many colleges, the new student is 'rushed'—invited to party after party—by 'fraternities' and 'sororities' eager to persuade him to join their group rather than some other, the college student leads a very active and highly organized social life. The importance of fraternities and sororities, which are residential clubs distinguished by names composed of Greek letters, varies a great deal from place to place. Some of the best known of women's colleges, for instance, do not permit the establishment of sororities. Other institutions build their entire social life round them, students who have not joined one, either because they were never invited or because they could not afford the annual fees, being left very much in the cold. It is doubtful whether fraternities and sororities serve any purpose which could not equally well be fulfilled by other organizations. Under the present system, they provide a social training which supplements the purely academic side of campus life.

The university is frequently enlivened by the activities of these secret societies, particularly during such periods as

'Hell Week,' the week preceding the initiation into the society of the season's recruits. Although the college man prides himself on his sophistication, he is not above indulging in old-fashioned horseplay and ragging, and during Hell Week the 'pledges' (initiates) are made the butts of a series of practical jokes. If the weather is hot they are likely to be ordered to attend classes wearing three jerseys and a fur coat. At my own college, a shy young man was sent to hail a tramcar; when it had stopped, his instructions were that he was to put his foot on the step, tie his shoelace, and then, thanking the dumbfounded guard, to walk away. Needless to say, the feud between Town and Gown is not always a matter of ancient history.

Honorary scholastic fraternities, with Greek letter names similar to those of the purely social organizations, also carry on some social activities. Election to membership in one of these is a recognition of high scholarship in a given field, and membership in the oldest of all Greek-letter societies, Phi Beta Kappa, is awarded in recognition of all-round excellence in scholarship, leadership, and character. Established in 1776, Phi Beta Kappa has included among its members such distinguished men as the poet Longfellow, the essayist Emerson, and President Wilson.

One of the most anomalous situations in American education resulted from the maintenance of college and university athletic teams of near-professional standards. Penniless and brainless football players at some universities were more easily able to earn their way through college than were their more intellectual brethren; if so-called scholarships were not forthcoming, easy jobs were. Their football coaches were in some cases paid as much as the college president. And their prowess on the football field brought pouring into the college exchequer thousands of dollars per week in receipts from the sale of admission tickets to excited 'alumni,' i.e. old students, who measured the importance of their Alma Mater solely by the success of her football teams. As American colleges and universities often ask for financial contributions from their former

students, the alumni must be appeased in matters great and small. In recent years, however, a changing sense of values has caused the graduates of many institutions to renounce the system of subsidized athletics and everywhere the blatant buying of athletic stars has ceased.

The spectacle of a big inter-university football match remains a colourful incident in the American scene. The vast concrete stadium is crowded with fifty or sixty thousand spectators. They are brightly and warmly dressed, for the football season is the autumn, and in most parts of the country the fall wind has a bite in it. Sometimes a heavy snowstorm begins during the game, and the players, sliding and running around the slippery field, are lost from sight behind the blinding flurries. Over the southern fields, the sun shines brightly, however, and nothing obscures the splendour of the demonstrations by the respective university bands and squads of cheerleaders. These take place in the intervals between the quarters and, particularly, between the two halves of the game.

Rivals fully as keen as the teams themselves, the uniformed musicians march in elaborate formations, their ranks suddenly taking the shape of the initials of their university as the music of the university song bursts forth. Both during the game and during the intervals, the cheerleaders, dressed in the university colours, conduct mass-cheering, contorting their bodies into fantastic positions in their efforts to draw from the crowd every shred of vocal power in support of the Alma Mater and the heroes who are about to make her name live forever—or at least until the next defeat. Enthusiastic supporters are voiceless when they leave the stadium after innumerable repetitions of the 'Skyrocket':

SssssssssssssssssssssssBoooooooooooooom Ah!
Minnetonka! Rah! Rah! Rah!

Among the cheering crowds sits a young woman whose clothes, make-up, hair-do, and manicure make her as smart a figure as any in the stadium. Her face is alight with

excitement, for a big game is a special treat to which she has long looked forward. Soon she will be on her way back to the less colourful scene of her daily job.

"Miss Brown, where do babies come from? I asked my mom, but she told me to ask you."

"Miss Brown, why are some people black and some people white?"

"Miss Brown——"

Miss Brown, of course, is a school-teacher. In a large city where her private life is really private, she can also be a human being. In a small town, she is a school-teacher twenty-four hours a day, and as fair a target for the criticism of the man in the street as is any other public figure. For she is a public figure; her salary is paid by the local taxpayers and they feel that they have a right to see that they get their money's worth. If Miss Brown, however well she may have done her work, is seen regularly leaving school too soon after her classes have departed, if Miss Brown is caught smoking a cigarette, if Miss Brown wears the same frock to school day after day, she may be summoned to the school superintendent's office and warned that the town has its eye on her.

Nevertheless, in spite of the restrictions imposed by the conditions of a teacher's life, so many young Americans have been entering the profession year after year that the field had long been overcrowded when the outbreak of war and the growth of the defence industry began to draw many teachers into other lines of work. For women, in particular, teaching is ordinarily the best paid profession. In 1941, women teachers in Cleveland, Ohio, received an average salary of \$179 (£45) per month, considerably more than the average salary of women in other professions, and almost double the average earnings of all women workers.

The summer holiday, two, three, or even three and a half months in length, attracts into the teaching profession both those people who want to have time for travel, study, or creative work, and those who like a complete change of activity and spend their summers doing seasonal jobs.

The oversupply of teachers has made it possible for state authorities to raise the requirements which must be fulfilled by those who wish to obtain a Teacher's Certificate, permitting them to teach in the public schools. Gone are the days when a girl of sixteen, with her own schooldays barely finished, could become a school-ma'am. In some states, the customary three years of training at a teachers' college is no longer sufficient even for teachers in elementary schools, and a state certificate is granted only to those who have a degree.

State laws prescribe the minimum of vocational training necessary to obtain the teachers' certificate. Wisconsin, for instance, requires courses in general psychology, educational psychology, the technique of teaching, and the teaching of special subjects. These requirements are not sufficient in the neighbouring state of Michigan, which demands additional experience in practice teaching.

For some time past the question of 'academic freedom'—i.e. the teacher's right to complete freedom of speech in the classroom—has been much discussed in the United States, where recognition of the fact that the continuation of democratic government rests finally upon the education of the common people has led to some perturbation over the power thus admitted to lie in the hands of the school-teacher. Clearly, if worthy citizens of a democracy can be made in school, subjects of a dictatorship can likewise be trained there. Proof of it lies in Nazi Germany, but Americans in general were aware of the danger long before Germany provided a convenient example of it.

The result of this fear has been that the man in the street has carefully observed the political sympathies of the teachers who instruct his children, and has further attempted to make sure that young minds would not be exposed to un-American political ideas by voting for the passage of laws requiring teachers to swear special oaths of allegiance to the United States and its form of government.

In so doing, he has sometimes denied the school-teacher the enjoyment of those very liberties in which he professes

to believe. Obviously, one person's opinion as to what is un-American is likely to differ from that of another. The reading of Plato's Republic might very well be forbidden on the ground that it is un-American; so might the discussion of a policy of free trade while the United States is committed to a policy of protective tariffs. Occasionally teachers protest, finding their work restricted intolerably, but most of them think it best to observe the letter of the law if not the spirit.

There has probably been more smoke than fire so far as the teaching either in schools or universities of dangerous political theories is concerned. Most Americans—and school-teachers are no exception—are conservative. Furthermore, they are fairly comfortable, and comfortable people do not usually take kindly to revolutionary theories. But the school-teacher is still suspect.

*How the American Adult goes on Learning—The C.C.C.
and other Constructive Schemes during the Depression—Get-
wise-quickly Methods—Educating Handicapped Children—
Helpful Libraries—What is the Influence of Newspapers?—
Some Well-known Columnists—Magazines and Reviews—
The Radio*

SCHOOL days, school days,
Dear old golden rule days !

sings the American on all those occasions which call for a song, oblivious of what school was really like, for it may have meant having his face washed in the snow daily by bigger boys, or being kept in after lessons because he could not understand square roots. The fact is that the average American likes school. He is a perennial scholar—at his own level. He may go from classes in paper-hanging to classes in ball-room dancing, acquiring only a sketchy knowledge of each. But he goes to school.

A glimpse of one of the most important aspects of the American educational programme may be obtained if we visit a crowded court-house in a back-woods county town. Here we find no jury, no lawyers ; only a judge and a room full of people. The day is cold and the men and women are warmly dressed ; the air in the court-room is soon heavy with the smell of damp clothing.

A swarthy black-browed man dressed in the northern farmer's plaid jacket, his breeches thrust into high rubber moccasin boots, stands nervously before the judge. The judge speaks slowly and kindly.

"Now, Mr. Simcovitch, why do you want to become an American citizen ?"

"I like United State ; I lif' ten year."

"You've been here for ten years and you like the United

States. I see. Well now, Mr. Simcovitch, who is the governor of the state?"

"Roosevel"—No?" The judge shakes his head and there is a pause.

"If you had to go to Washington from here, Mr. Simcovitch, what direction would you go in, north, east, south or west?"

Mr. Simcovitch repeats audibly, "Nort', east, sout', vest." He looks up. "Vassington—vest." He is wrong again. The judge leans forward.

"No, Mr. Simcovitch. You're not ready to be an American citizen yet. You must learn more. Have you been going to night-school? No? You study with your kids, eh? Well, I think you had better go to night-school all the same, don't you? You learn English, learn all about the United States; then come back. Understand?" The disappointed Mr. Simcovitch nods and retires, and the next applicant for citizenship comes before the examiner.

Education in the United States has long included the two programmes, education of the young, and education of the adult. Naturally, a part of the zeal for adult education arose out of the need for preparing non-English-speaking immigrants for American citizenship. Those who first went to the free evening classes in English, Civics, and American History, discovered that they could also go to classes in typing, or welding, or law. During the depression, when few could afford expensive entertainment and when millions were employed only on part-time jobs, if they were employed at all, schools and education schemes of many kinds were established to provide an opportunity for using a surplus of leisure to good advantage.

Not strictly educational in purpose or activity, the Civilian Conservation Corps (the C.C.C.) nevertheless provides an example of such an effort. When Franklin Delano Roosevelt became President, there were millions of unemployed young men in the country. These had either lost their jobs because, whenever factories cut down the pay-roll, older men with families to support or with long experience

were retained and young men had to go, or, having finished high school or college after the slump had started, they had never had jobs at all. They were bitter, confused, apathetic. They were beginning to say, "If this is democracy, you can have it! It's not my idea of the good life."

The Administration was aware of their problem, and also aware that, year after year, vast forest fires had reduced thousands of acres of forests to charred stumps and wind-scattered ashes. With one stroke—the formation of the Civilian Conservation Corps—it saved the remaining forests and the young men. They were given warm clothing, good food, a little money, and plenty of work. They learned elementary forestry on the job, and tough young Chicagoans, whose chief ambition in life had been to win the jackpot in a slot-machine, now desired nothing so much as the training which would prepare them one day to become fully-fledged government Rangers.

Those who wanted to learn more about forestry learned it. Those who had never been able to go to college were given courses of university standard in their chosen fields. Those who were illiterate, and there were some who were, learned to read and write. Would-be journalists studied journalism and published camp newspapers. The C.C.C. conserved far more than material resources for a nation which in the early 1930's had no idea how badly it would soon need every iota of brain-power, will-power and physical strength which it possessed.

But sometimes Americans expect more of teachers and books than even teachers and books can do. There are shy girls who spend their hard-earned dollars on courses which promise to teach them how to acquire charm in twenty-four lessons; housewives who try to become accomplished conversationalists by reading the encyclopædia for fifteen minutes a day; business men who, in accordance with the precepts of literary evangelists, attempt to streamline their minds and learn to influence people.

That education does sometimes perform miracles is best seen in the results obtained by those concerned with the

education of handicapped children. Care of the blind and the deaf in state schools began very early, and in recent years there has been a large increase in the number of special classes, and ungraded classes in ordinary schools, as well as of special vocational schools for crippled children or for sub-normal or delinquent children.

Many Americans believe that the centre of school life should be the school library and that the centre of the cultural life of a town should be the free public library. In the middle of the nineteenth century, a visiting Englishman wrote, with little exaggeration, that "The libraries, with which even the smallest towns are provided, are also the means of disseminating much general information, and contribute in a great measure to the general intelligence of the people." There are, perhaps, a very few small towns which do not have free libraries to-day; there is no one in the United States who cannot have access to travelling libraries or to the huge collections of books for the cost of a post-card addressed to the state library. Rental libraries exist as well, sometimes in conjunction with a free library, but they are used to a much smaller extent than in England.

The Library of Congress deserves special mention in any discussion of American institutions. The Library of Congress has become the national library of the United States, a library comprising more than 14,000,000 volumes. It receives a copy of every book that is published under copyright in the United States, and, in addition, is rich in priceless manuscripts, first editions, and rare editions. Here is displayed the original copy of the Declaration of Independence; here are also such curiosities as manuscripts of music composed by Robert Louis Stevenson, who played the flute. This wonderful collection of books is for the use of every American, not merely for the scholar who comes with a letter of introduction, nor for the man who can afford a subscription fee. The public has access to the shelves, not only to card catalogues.

But the greater part of what is read by the average man

in Britain or the United States to-day is not read in books, but in newspapers. Indeed, the Sunday editions alone of American newspapers have more reading matter in them than many books ; the greatest of them may run to as much as a hundred and fifty pages. Even the newspapers published in towns with a population of fifteen or sixteen thousand may have twenty pages.

But the United States, the Press included, is a land of contrasts. Alert, quick-witted journalists have earned a world-wide reputation for getting their story. Newspaper men with expense accounts which to European eyes often appear to be unlimited keep the American public informed of every event that takes place in the multi-ringed circus of world-affairs. Syndicated columns purport to give the 'inside story' to the readers of countless small-town papers which cannot afford to maintain their own reporters in the capitals. More newspapers are bought now than ever before.

And yet the Press in the United States appears to have lost both prestige and influence. Although Americans will rise angrily to defend their belief that the American Press is free, they frequently reveal a lack of faith in the truth of the news published.

Obviously this bewilderment is not the fault of the newspapers alone. In spite of every effort to keep pace with political changes, journalists cannot avoid being caught off guard again and again. Neither can diplomats, politicians, governments. The newspapers were more directly to blame, however, when, being predominantly in the hands of Republicans, they steadily predicted the defeat of President Roosevelt, a Democrat, before his re-election in 1936 and in 1940. In such instances as this, the newspapers not only failed to give a true indication of the movement of public opinion, but revealed, by their failure to alter the election results, the extent to which they had lost the power to mould it.

As in England, much of the news printed, whether local, national, or international, is obtained through agencies, the

greatest of which is the Associated Press. Membership in the Associated Press is highly prized, the co-operative nature of the enterprise giving its members a sense of pride in belonging to one of the greatest news gathering organizations in the world. News obtained from the AP is paid for either in cash or in local news supplied free. The vast size of the country makes a national Press impossible. Most people in the Middle or Far West never see a newspaper published in New York or Washington. The Scripps-Howard and Hearst chains are to some extent a substitute for the national Press in a smaller country. The Hearst newspapers in the past reflected vigorously the point of view of their proprietor, William Randolph Hearst. In 1898, when the American battleship 'Maine' was blown up in Havana Harbour under circumstances which have never been publicly explained, the 'yellow press' so inflamed a portion of public opinion that many people consider it largely responsible for the entry of the United States into the Spanish-American War. Hearst's influence is now waning. The Scripps-Howard papers are more independent in tone than most units of the Hearst chain, and appeal to a more intelligent public.

The evening papers have been both more numerous and more influential in America than the morning papers. Before November, 1941, when the *Chicago Sun* made its debut, Chicago, with a population of over three millions, had only one morning paper, the rabidly isolationist *Chicago Tribune*, which had a wider circulation than any American paper except the Anglo-phile *New York Times*. The latter has long been considered the best of American newspapers. P.M. is a new evening paper published in New York, which has attempted to avoid the danger of having its point of view modified by deference to advertisers, upon the revenue from whom other papers are largely dependent, and it has eliminated advertising entirely.

The American law of libel is less stringent than the British, but editors make little use of their powers to attack strongly entrenched interests. The old-time vigorous campaigning

against graft continues chiefly in small local newspapers, which in rural areas still have some power.

Nowhere in America does the leader-writer have as much influence as he has in Britain. The average man wants to read facts ; he does not care what the editor of the newspaper thinks about them. If he is interested in opinions, they will be the opinions of individual columnists, not lines of policy adopted by editorial boards.

The American columnist is an individualist. It is his personal opinion, differing as it may from the expressed policy of the paper which publishes it, that attracts the interest of the average man. The editor is careful not to offend those from whom the newspaper derives its income ; the established columnist may not care whom he offends, though Mrs. Roosevelt, as wife of the President, must no doubt exercise some caution in writing her column, ' My Day,' when she turns to politics after describing a domestic mishap, such as the dropping of a tea-tray in front of the visiting King and Queen. Certain newspapers publish the comments of several columnists, some of whom write only of politics (Dorothy Thompson and Walter Lippmann, for example), while others, like Walter Winchell, confine their attention to gossip, theatrical, or society news.

Besides the news, editorials (leaders), and columnists' commentaries, American newspapers contain a large amount of other material, much of which is syndicated for publication throughout the country. Comic strips, which are still known colloquially as ' funny papers,' but which long ago ceased to be funny and became pictorial adventure stories, take up a full page or more in daily papers, and a dozen pages in colour in the Sunday specials. Numerous counsellors on morals and correct behaviour, of whom the best known are Dorothy Dix and Emily Post, offer daily advice to the lonely and the love-lorn, while others prescribe diets for reducing (and gaining) weight, remind the housewife of the necessity of looking charming at breakfast time if she is to retain the love of her husband, and discuss problems of child-care, family health, and home-making.

Similar articles are to be found in the women's magazines, where the emphasis again on charm lends support to Mr. Robert Waithman's dictum that, just as the great pre-occupation of men in America is business, the great pre-occupation of women is being desired. Admittedly, the intellectual standard of many of these magazines is not high, but it is no lower than that of their British counterparts.

The American family subscribes to more periodicals than the British. In addition to the popular pictorial, news and pocket reviews, e.g. *Life*, *Time*, *Reader's Digest*, and the women's magazines, there are, on the one hand, the pulp magazines—the Western, adventure, and true story magazines—and, on the other, the quality magazines, such as the *Atlantic Monthly* and *Harper's*. There is, however, no equivalent of such periodicals as the 'Spectator' or the 'New Statesman and Nation,' nor is it conceivable that there could be an equivalent to 'Punch.' The cover alone of the *New Yorker* suggests the different type of reader to which it is addressed.

In any discussion of the sources from which the average man receives his information, the radio must be given prominent place. Although the radio in America is a business enterprise and is financed by advertising, it has, to a great extent, taken the place of the newspaper in providing a means for the free expression of public opinion. Inasmuch as a radio station in itself does not stand for any political or social programme, it is free of pressure from advertisers, each of whom can do what he likes, within the law, with the time for which he has paid, but he has nothing to say about the time bought by others. Straight news-bulletins are broadcast on the station's sustaining programme, that is, without being paid for by advertisers. Commentators usually speak on bought time.

The existence of seven hundred broadcasting stations in the country gives the American a wide choice of programmes from which he can select his entertainment. A few stations broadcast all night for the benefit of night-workers; the majority start broadcasting at 6.30 a.m. and

continue until midnight. The listener can hear, not only political speeches of every type, from President Roosevelt's Fireside Chats to the campaign speeches of local politicians, but numerous unrehearsed discussions of every phase of national life, and actual political conventions.

The financial resources of the great radio corporations have also made it possible for them to maintain abroad American news commentators whose nightly broadcasts from London, Berne, Cairo, Ankara, and elsewhere are relayed to millions of listeners in the United States. In pre-war days, an international hook-up occasionally allowed an exchange of news between commentators in various capitals and this, too, was relayed to American listeners. Housewives with wireless sets in their kitchens, commercial travellers with radios in their cars, loungers in village shops, young people drinking milk-shakes in corner drug-stores, all have heard the voices of men who described history in the making.

Respect for Industry, not for a Leisured Class—No Rigid Class Distinctions—Labour fairly well off by Comparison with other Countries—Extremes of Wealth—How some Workers Live—Mining and Farming Families—Well-paid Factory Workers—White-collar Workers—The Professions—The Negroes and their Problem

THE difficulties of existence on the American frontier made a virtue of industry, a vice of idleness, and virtue and vice they remain to this day. A leisured class has never been admired or wanted in the United States, and the man in the street gravely distrusts the chap who has never earned his living. Yet in America, during times of peace, labour has succeeded more than anywhere else in the world in reducing the length of the working week.

Patriotic Americans like to call the United States a classless country. Their statement is not entirely true; no country can be classless in which a small number of people possess a great part of the wealth. But as long as he is earning a satisfactory income, the average American goes up and down the social scale without worrying very much about his status as a skilled labourer, a white-collar (black-coated) worker, or even member of a profession. This is naturally more true of young men than of those who have made a place for themselves and are working for advancement in their own particular spheres. Nevertheless it is possible to find in the United States people of all ages and positions who have had an astonishing variety of experience in different types of work. I have known a cook who had worked for years in one of the great houses near Chicago leave suddenly to take up osteopathy; I have known a school-teacher give up teaching to become a cook. More than one man with a Ph.D. degree has been a taxi-driver.

The average working-man in the United States, if asked to compare the conditions under which he earns his living

with conditions elsewhere, expresses a sincere belief that nowhere else in the world would he be as well off as he is in the good old U.S.A. His faith in the United States as the land of promise to which his forbears emigrated from the barren highlands, the little farms, the crowded cities of Europe, shines undimmed despite the hardships caused by the depression of the '30's and despite the large number of workers who, depression or no depression, have always been as badly housed, fed, and paid as the people in the worst housed, fed, or paid sections of pre-war Europe. There were in the 1930's more unemployed in the United States in proportion to the population than in any of the other great nations.

Once more America reveals herself as a land of contrasts. On the one hand, statistics show that in the years 1935-36, more than two-thirds of the families in the United States had a total income of less than \$30 (then equal to about £6) per week; nearly a half had less than \$20; and nearly a sixth had less than \$10 per week. President Roosevelt declared in 1938 that 47 per cent. of all the families and individuals in the United States had an income of less than \$1,000 (at that time, £200) per year. On the other hand, he pointed out that 1.5 per cent. of the population have an aggregate income equalling that of all the lower 47 per cent. combined.

But all the contrasts do not lie between the 'share-croppers' and 'Dust-bowl' farmers on the one side and the millionaires on the other. The income earned by the average man differs from state to state. The average family income in the state of Mississippi is about \$200 (at the present rate of exchange £50) per year; according to David L. Cohn, writing in the *Atlantic Monthly* of October, 1940, the average income of a family in Dallas, Texas (population 270,000) is \$3,600 or £900.

Just as Americans talking about political conditions in Europe often tend to over-simplify the issues at stake, so it is all too easy for people talking about economic conditions in the United States to over-simplify the situation

there. Such variations as exist in this, as in every phase of American life, cannot be summed up more briefly than in those lines by Langston Hughes, the Negro poet :

I live on a park bench
You, Park Avenue.
Hell of a distance
Between us two.

But statistics, whether on income or anything else, are meaningless unless we know what lies behind them. An American company recently issued large advertisements showing a coloured photograph of a very small dog with a wistful expression in a very large field ; underneath was the caption, " I don't want to be a Statistic." Nor does anyone.

Milo Frank, the steam-shovel operator in a Mid-West iron mine, is not a statistic. Milo is a man of thirty-five, married, with two children. His work is very well paid but is seasonal, although he has been lucky in having been employed in stripping when most of the pick and shovel men were laid off. Many of the iron mines in northern Michigan and Minnesota are not below the surface, but are open pit mines, and work is hampered by bad weather : heavy rains flood the pits, and heavy snow or exceptional cold may force the men to seek shelter. When the mine is running full strength, and Milo gets in an hour or two a day at overtime rates, he earns about fifty pounds a month. He lives in a ' company ' house : a wooden bungalow, containing six rooms and bath, which, with its surrounding garden, he rents from the mining company for three pounds a month, and he pays five shillings a month for keeping his car in the company garage.

Until the company unions were abolished, Milo belonged to the company union, but it was a union only in name, hastily established by workmen and mining officials in order to prevent unionization by outside organizers. Fundamentally, Milo is anti-union and strongly anti-closed shop. He cannot understand why some people support a

system which would deny the American working-man the right to choose for himself whether or not he will join a union. This, it seems to Milo, is one of the rights which should belong to every citizen of a democracy.

When the mine suddenly closes, without warning or explanation, Milo and his wife, Vera, take it with a wry smile. The letters Vera writes to her sister contain half-bitter little jokes :

You will be surprised to hear that Milo is 'on a vacation' again. He has been having a great many vacations lately. We thought the mine would run all winter this year, but Tuesday they closed down, we don't know how long for. Milo says it's almost as bad being a miner as being a king nowadays ; both are out of work most of the time.

But really Milo is lucky and he knows it. His house is comfortable and cheap ; during the summer he raises his own vegetables in the backyard ; in spite of the frequent lay-offs, he has paid for the car and most of the furniture, which was gradually acquired on the hire-purchase plan. The local schools, supported by taxes, which fall chiefly on the mines, are superbly equipped and well-staffed, and promise to give his children a free education not only through the high school but the first two years of university training as well. Things will have to be very much worse than he has known them before he begins to look for another job.

Not so with Art Green. Art Green is one of the Americans—there are many of them—who call themselves jacks of all trades and masters of none. He is actually master of a few : brought up on a farm, he knows how to take care of cattle and land. He has the hands of a born mechanic, and years of tinkering with automobile engines have given him the right to ask for a job in any garage in the country. Wanderlust and a quick tongue made him a commercial traveller in ironmongery for some years after the Great War. But Art has tried many other types of work in his time. He and his wife bought a ranch in

Montana, then mortgaged it to set up a village grocery store. When the depression reached them, they lost everything except their car and what they could carry in it. Borrowing the money for motor-oil and petrol, they drove to California, and there found themselves jobs; Mrs. Green as manageress of a quick lunch or snack bar, Art as a semi-skilled factory hand. For the moment, with Art's fifty pounds a month and Mrs. Green's fourteen, plus meals, they are comparatively well-off. But Art is beginning to talk of the good old days in the East, and already his wife foresees the time when, with their furniture sold and the back seat of the car laden with portable goods, they will once more cross the mountains and plains on their way 'back home.'

There are other Americans, and there are millions of them, who would like to change jobs but who dare not, or cannot, risk finding themselves less fortunate than they are now. The tenants on Southern farms (who are called *share-croppers* because they pay the rent of their land and equipment in a proportion of the harvest they produce) have a standard of living as low as white men anywhere in the world. Receiving almost no cash from one year's end to the next, they barter what they can with their neighbours, and over long periods of the year sustain life on a near-starvation diet of salt-pork and corn-meal mush doused with cheap molasses (black treacle).

Federal child labour laws forbid the employment of children on farms or in houses other than their own homes; nevertheless, a report for the year 1930 showed that in the state of Mississippi more than a fourth, and in Alabama, nearly a fifth of all the children from ten to fifteen years of age were at work. Without their labour, the earnings of father and mother together were not sufficient to keep the family alive.

Even in other sections of the country, farming is the least well paid of all occupations. Ignorant and greedy exploitation of the natural resources of soil and forest have resulted in the vast dust-storms which blew away the top-

soil from great portions of the arable land in the states lying south of North Dakota. The extent of these storms can scarcely be imagined. Nearly a thousand miles away from the devastated area, the air, during a storm, was as thick as a London fog and the sun, for days, was a tiny blood-red ball.

Efforts are now being made to reclaim the eroded soil, through the work of such projects as the Tennessee Valley Authority and others. A great belt of forest has been planted to hold the moisture in the soil and to serve as a wind-break, and where it is possible, crops have been planted which build up the soil.

Extremes of wealth and of poverty are absent from the dairy farms of Wisconsin and Iowa, where the landscape often resembles that in English farming districts. Here, and in the 'corn-belt,' growing maize, are employed a third of the United States farm population, earning rather more than a third of the total farm income. Farther to the north, here as in the east, one comes upon stony soil and barren hills, and few farmers make a living entirely off the land. Lumber mills and the mining industry give them opportunities for seasonal jobs to supplement their otherwise all too meagre incomes.

The farmers of California are the most prosperous of all. Their major products are oranges, lemons, and winter vegetables, which command a wide market and an immediate financial return. The work on the large farms is done chiefly by seasonal hired labour. Californians rose up in violent indignation to defend themselves against the accusations levelled by John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, a novel which describes the experiences of migrants looking for work in California, but there is no doubt that the number of people, many from the Dust-bowl, who made their way to the fruit farms, hoping to find jobs, made it possible for farm managers to offer what has been called a dying rather than a living wage.

Last of all, there are the wheat farms of the Middle and North-West, ranging in size from the one hundred and

sixty acre Minnesota farm to the six or eight hundred acre farm of the average Western wheat grower. Here we may meet Nels Soderstrom, who has two hundred and forty acres in central Minnesota. Nels's family history is typical of that of many farmers in this part of the country.

His parents arrived as immigrants from Sweden at the end of the last century, bringing with them the first three children of a family which eventually included five more. Life was hard. Elsie and Ole left school at fourteen in order to work at home, Peter, the youngest of the Swedish-born children having died of pneumonia soon after reaching Minnesota. Elsie died of tuberculosis before she was thirty; people knew that the disease ran in the family. Ole and the younger members of the family carried on after the old man had a fatal heart attack.

In time the farm prospered; the wooden cottage was enlarged and repainted; a new silo was built. Nels had two years in high school; after him came Selma and Martha, who took the commercial course and got their diplomas. They left home to find work in Minneapolis, and soon found husbands as well. Norman earns forty-five pounds a month driving a fast bus from Minneapolis to Omaha, Nebraska. The youngest of the family, and their pride, is Cecil (his name was chosen by Elsie, who came across it in a book, and it is always pronounced with a long e). Cecil took his degree at the state university, and is now a research chemist in a factory near New York.

When Ole married a neighbouring widow and went to live on her land, Nels and his hard-working wife were left with their babies on the old farmstead. Like other farmers, they rarely have ready cash. Although they may not need quite as large or as expensive equipment as their cousins on the larger wheat farms in the state of Washington, they too spend their annual margin of profit on first payments on tractors or new barns.

But less than a quarter of the nation's population are farmers. More than a quarter are employed in manufacture. What of the people who make the clothes, the

cars, the refrigerators, the furniture which the country needs?

In comparison with the British, they are, in general, highly paid. Mass production makes it possible for the average American workman to produce anywhere up to more than four times as much as the British. It is to be expected, therefore, that his income is greater as well. Figures for 1930 show that the skilled or semi-skilled workers in the United States earned an average wage double that of the skilled British workman, and the unskilled American slightly more than double the wage of the unskilled Britisher. One finds individual skilled piece workers earning much larger sums; an American soldier now in the Canadian Army tells me, for instance, that as a highly skilled piece worker in the millinery trade in Chicago he earned \$120 (£30) per week before the war. Since the war, the income of the factory employee who previously earned £9 (\$35) per week has risen to something like £15, although it must be remembered that he was unemployed for several months while the factory was being changed over to defence production. Remuneration in many other lines of work is correspondingly high.

Clerical workers and shop employees are somewhat less well paid. A shop-girl in one of the great department stores of Chicago or Detroit receives a starting wage of about \$14 (£3 10s.) per week, but she may be required to have had some university training. The salary of a shorthand-typist ranges from £10 per month to the very much higher than average salary of £25 or £30 paid a junior typist in the Federal Civil Service, where higher grades are paid even more.

The position of the professional worker in the United States is, in general, similar to that of professional workers in England. The American Medical Association protects the interests of the medical profession; the Press Association, of newspaper men; the National Educational Association, of educationalists. Attempts to organize the latter into a trade union have not met with much success.

The average salary paid school-teachers in the United States in the year 1935-36 was \$1,283 (about £256). Arkansas teachers received an average salary equivalent to £100, that year, while teachers in the state of New York had an average income of \$2,414, at that time equivalent to £483. And in Georgia, where the average income of white teachers was £117, Negro teachers in the elementary schools received £50 per year.

The Negroes are generally at the bottom of the wage scale. Coloured women, for instance, receive on the average only 60 per cent. as much as white women for doing identical work, and the men, whether working in the North or the South, suffer from similar discrimination. In 1937, only 2.5 per cent. of the total number of employed Negroes were professional workers. The last to be employed in times of prosperity, the first to be fired in a depression, often cheated by those who take advantage of their child-like carelessness with money, forced to pay high rents for wretched living quarters, Negroes are still far from winning social, economic, or even political equality with the whites. A recent writer estimates that less than one-tenth of the adult Negroes of the South are on the voting lists to-day. Individuals among them have in some cases surmounted the barriers of colour; the race as a whole, numerically 10 per cent. of the population of the United States, has suffered from lack of education and educational opportunities which would enable it to develop to its full capacities.

But if the problem of the Negro has not been solved, neither has it been shelved. It is probable that among the casualties of war will be the feudal tradition of the Old South. The American Negro who fights in defence of his homeland, defends also the possibility of sharing the justice and equality which, in the past, have been denied him.

Reasons for Slow Advance of Unionism in America—The Employee not in a Groove—Likewise Slow Demand for Social Security Legislation—Company Unions—Some Labour Agitators—Welfare Capitalism—Recent Rapid Growth of Union Movement—C.I.O. and A.F.L.—The Place of John L. Lewis—Influence of President Roosevelt—Labour Gaining Ground—Public Works Projects—Social Security Programme—How Old Age and Unemployment Insurances Work

THE first trade union organized in America is believed to have been formed in 1792 in Philadelphia. In 1941, despite the fact that during the entire previous decade labour had been on the march, only 22 per cent. of the 50,000,000 workers in the United States were members of trade unions. Unionism had advanced very slowly since the first little group of shoemakers formed their short-lived organization just three years after the American Constitution had become effective.

There are many reasons why the task of the union organizer has been a difficult one. In a country where every mother had the right to hope that some day her son would be President, the son grew up expecting to become at least the manager of the factory or the shop in which he worked. If he started at the bottom of the ladder and his wages were low, he grumbled about them but looked forward confidently to the day when he would be promoted and receive a 'raise.' If he had to wait too long, he quit his job and looked for another, or followed the frontier as it moved westward. If he was an immigrant, his income often seemed satisfactory in comparison with wages in the old country, at least until he had learned to demand the American standard of living.

Not only was the average American long opposed to trade unions, but he was equally antagonistic to what he now calls social security legislation. He expected to save

something for his old age, but, if he couldn't, what were children for if not to take care of their old parents who had given them all they had? As for unemployment insurance, pay a man when he isn't working and he's likely never to go to work again. No—sir-ee. Any man who was worth his salt could get along without any help from the government or anyone else.

So said the average American in 1870, in 1900, in 1929. Some Americans say so to-day, despite the development of the social conscience which has permitted the passage of the Federal Social Security Act. But the little man who played the stock exchange just once in his life—in autumn, 1929—and was wiped out, the man who had his lifetime's savings in one of the countless banks that failed in 1932, the man who was unemployed for three years during the depression and, too proud to accept relief, incurred debts which he has not yet finished repaying, these men look with gratitude toward a future that no longer terrifies them with threats of the Poor House.

The fact that the average man hoped some day to be an employer himself has made public opinion in the past strongly sympathetic to the employing side in a labour dispute. Stein, Davis and their collaborators in "Labor Problems in America," a textbook for university students, say :

Traditionally, it has been the employing side which has been able to secure the help of the police against the possible violence of striking unionists ; typically unions have had no redress against intimidation by company guards. In some cases, even peaceful attempts at unionization have been banned by governmental aid to employers or by governmental tolerance of company repression.

In innumerable minor cases, and in three internationally known ones, the Chicago Haymarket affair of 1886, the Mooney-Billings trial in 1917, and the Sacco-Vanzetti case in 1927, the evidence makes it clear that men were punished, not because they were guilty of murder but because of their ' dangerous ' views. In addition, the state frequently

assisted the employers by using the courts to issue injunctions. In the 1920's these became one of the most effective weapons against attempts to establish unions.

From the beginning of the labour movement, the employees' attempts to organize have been paralleled by the formation of employers' associations. Evidence of the extent to which employers are prepared to go in their determination to fight unionism is given in the Report on Industrial Espionage (75th Congress, 2nd Session, Senate Report no. 46, 1938), which reveals that one big automobile works alone spent roughly a million dollars for detective services between January 1, 1934, and July 31, 1936.

Another report, this time made by the National Labor Relations Board, a government agency, includes the following description of opposition organized by the Ford Motor Company to union activity:

The culmination of Company hostility against union organization . . . occurred during the riots at the gates of the Dearborn plant on May 26. Temporary Ford employees, among them Detroit prize-fighters with taped knuckles and others identified as having long police records, were waiting in expectation at the Dearborn plant gates together with regular members of the Ford Service Department. It was public knowledge that the Automobile Workers intended to distribute union leaflets. They had obtained a permit from the City of Dearborn to pass out handbills. Detroit newspaper reporters and photographers were at hand . . . Mounted police were at the scene . . .

When the Union group ascended a large overpass across Miller Road at Gate 4 they were told: "This is Ford property. Get the hell off of here." Without making response or objection the group again started walking toward the stairway. They had taken only a few steps when they were attacked. Walter T. Reuther of Local No. 174, United Automobile Workers, and Richard T. Frankenstein, Director of the Union's Ford Organizing Committee, were singled out for particular attention. Each was knocked down and viciously kicked. They were raised in the air several times

and thrown upon their backs on the concrete. Reuther was kicked down the stairways, beaten and chased down Miller Road. Frankensteen, beaten into insensibility for a few moments, was also kicked down the stairway . . . the Dearborn mounted policemen who were present made no attempt to intervene and prevent violence. (*Release*, Dec., 1937, quoted by Stein, Davis, etc., p. 525.)

But not every effort to fight unionism has been violent. Mr. Henry Ford himself has been the chief exponent of a technique of labour control which was developed in the 1920's and which has been called 'Welfare Capitalism.' Welfare capitalism is based on the theory that it pays an employer to promote the welfare of the employee because a well-cared-for employee works more efficiently and is, therefore, a better producer than a worker who is worried or badly fed and clothed. In accordance with this theory, employers have provided workers with life, accident, and sickness insurance at the expense of the employer or with his aid; they have built clubhouses and playgrounds, and encouraged the formation of company athletic teams; and they have sold stock in the corporation to the corporation employees. The depression taught the hopeful stockholders a bitter lesson; they learned never again to invest their savings in the firm which employed them because during a slump they risked the loss of savings as well as employment.

In spite of anti-union activities the union movement has grown rapidly since 1931. The American Federation of Labor, which celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in that year, numbered about five million members in 1941; the Congress for Industrial Organization, which was established (as the Committee for Industrial Organization) on November 9th, 1935, and which has become the rival of the A.F.L., also has approximately five million members. There are about a million workers in independent unions.

In general, the American worker has little sympathy with radical philosophies, and the A.F.L. takes its stand definitely in opposition to Communism or any un-American

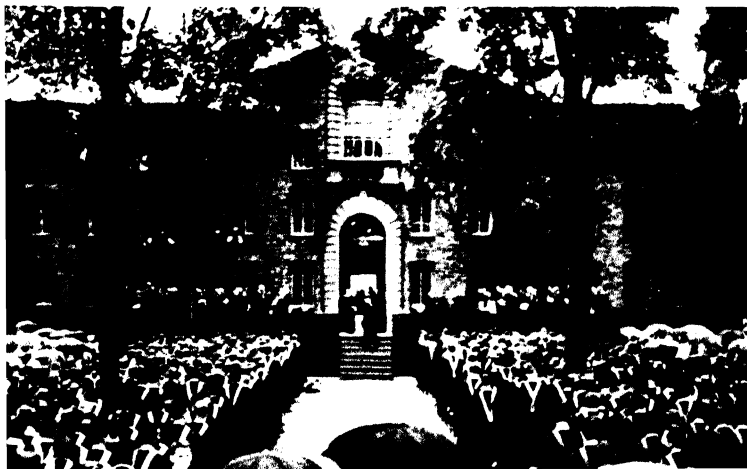


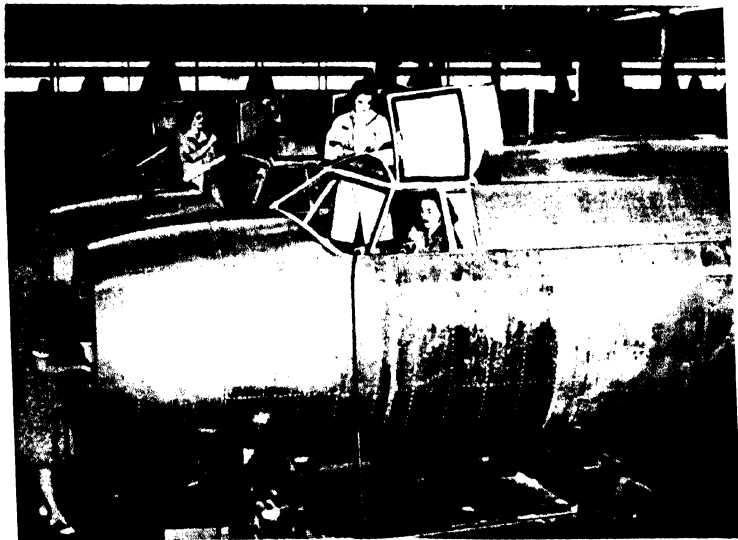
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(Above) The High School at North Sacramento, California
Erected by the Public Works Administration for children from five districts.

(Below) Commencement exercises at Princeton University
Hundreds of students graduate

Associa





Keystone and Wide World

Airplanes

The American output of warplanes is gigantic.

(Above) Going to work in the huge Lockheed Factory at Burbank, California.

(Below) Workers in the Glenn L. Martin plant, Baltimore. Women have replaced many men who were called to the forces.

economic theory. William Green, long the president of the A.F.L. has said :

The American Federation of Labor respects Capital. We believe in industry and we believe that Capital is as necessary and as essential to our national development as men and women. We believe that Capital has a right to organize. We believe that financial institutions should be built up.

The C.I.O., on the other hand, has often been accused, particularly by members of the A.F.L., of having been Communistic in origin. The vigour with which the C.I.O., under the leadership of Mr. John L. Lewis, pushed forward its recruiting campaigns, seeking to organize the millions of unskilled workers who, for the most part, had been neglected by union organizers, frightened employers into co-operation with the A.F.L., which thus became a strong ally of the employing side. Bitter civil war has resulted in one deadlock after another, with neither organization definitely closing the door against any future labour unity.

John L. Lewis, who, to quote Stein and Davis, "more than any other man of our time, has made a deep imprint upon unionism in America," is a man with a curiously varied history. Until 1933, he was one of the most conservative leaders in the A.F.L. During the First World War, he opposed wage and price fixing in the mining industry; he called off a national strike in 1919, much against the will of the miners and joined in 'Red' scares, denouncing Communists as a menace to the country. Yet until recently he was considered the standard bearer of the progressive factions in the labour movement.

No discussion of the position of organized labour in the United States is complete without acknowledgment of the changes that have taken place under the influence of President Roosevelt. From the famous Section 7a in the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933, which was later declared unconstitutional, came strong encouragement of unionization, for it guaranteed labourers the right to "bargain collectively through representatives of their own

choosing." With the Wagner Act of 1935, labour won an even greater victory; company unions were abolished, and the National Labor Relations Board was established to investigate attempts to prevent the formation of unions and to prosecute employers where necessary.

In addition to passing the abortive N.I.R.A., the Wagner Act, and the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (often called the wages and hours act), Congress under Roosevelt's leadership has promoted a long series of public works projects which are designed to prevent the demoralization of those who cannot get jobs in private industry. In the belief that nothing so weakens a man's spirit as having to live on public funds, Roosevelt conceived the idea of establishing work relief, and the Civil Works Administration was set up with the purpose of giving four million men a chance to earn a living.

In 1933, with fifteen or sixteen millions of unemployed, most of them for a full year and many for three, the country was in so desperate a situation that the plan was put into operation before it had been very carefully thought out. Much of the work, e.g. building piles of stones near roadsides into the shapes of great settees and arm-chairs, which, unmortared, fell into heaps at the first frost, was not only unnecessary but futile.

However, from this hasty beginning came the more carefully planned Works Project Administration, the National Youth Administration, the C.C.C. (see page 64) and the establishment of the T.V.A. or Tennessee Valley Authority.

Under the latter scheme, not only has the government built dams and generating plants for the production of electricity at low cost, and planted forests for the purposes of flood-control, but labour employed on the projects has been housed in model towns, has received high wages, and has been provided with recreational, health, and educational centres. Negroes have not suffered from the usual discrimination against them, and the benefits derived from the completion of the various units in the T.V.A. have

been made available to even the poorest backwoods farmers by a scheme which permits them to borrow money from the government on easy terms so that they can buy the electrical equipment needed to modernize their homes.

Hand in hand with labour legislation has gone the establishment of a vast social security programme. The Social Security Act which went into effect on January 1st, 1937, provides old age and unemployment insurance, aid to needy children, to the blind and to people with other physical handicaps, and measures to improve public health.

Old Age Pensions schemes have now been adopted in every state. In some the funds are provided half by state, and half by Federal government; in others, workers and employers each pay a levy of a small percentage of the worker's wage. About half the people employed in the United States (practically all those who have a business or industrial job) are covered by this plan, many of the remainder being already insured under previous pension schemes. Agricultural and maritime workers, domestic servants, and a few other categories are excluded.

The way in which the old age pension scheme works is best revealed by examples of what happens in individual cases. Workers must be sixty-five years old and must, of course, have made their payments toward the pension during the period since the Social Security Act was passed. The amount of the monthly benefit payment which any pensioner receives depends upon his average monthly pay, being a percentage of that sum plus a credit of 1 per cent. for each year on the job. The percentage varies, being fairly large when low wages are concerned, and small when wages are large. No payment is less than \$10 (£2 10s.) per month or more than \$85 (£21). After she has reached the age of sixty-five, the wife of a working-man is entitled to a pension equal to half the amount her husband receives; if she becomes a widow, she receives three-fourths.

Under this system, Roy Morris, a tram company employee, who earned an average wage of twenty-five pounds a

month since the scheme was started and worked for four years, retires at the age of sixty-five with a monthly pension of £6 3s. a month plus 1 per cent. for each of the four years, or five shillings a month. He will receive this monthly payment as long as he lives, unless he goes back to work on a job covered by the Social Security scheme and paying more than about four pounds a month. When his wife reaches the age of sixty-five she will receive exactly half the sum her husband receives, £3 2s. 6d., so that together they will have £9 7s. 6d. per month.

Roy Morris's brother lives in the South, where wages are far below the national average, and his income has been only £10 a month. If he were old enough to retire at the same time as Roy, his pension would be about £4 3s. per month; with his wife's £2 1s. 6d., the total monthly benefit would be £6 9s. 6d.

If a woman is left a widow before she is sixty-five, she receives a lump sum equal to six monthly payments of her husband's pension and must support herself until at the age of 65 she becomes eligible for a monthly payment equal to three-fourths of her husband's benefit.

Unemployment insurance schemes vary from state to state, the revenue coming, in some states, from the employers only, and in others from both employers and employees. The A.F.L. opposed unemployment insurance until 1932, six months after the first state law was enacted, and unemployment insurance dues were not collected under a federal scheme until 1936. Reserve funds were built up during a two-year period after contributions began, and some states began to pay benefits only in 1939. Many categories of workers are again omitted from the compulsory scheme, but in almost every state the law permits an uncovered company to come into the system voluntarily if it will remain for at least two years. High salaried black-coated workers are included, only the first £750 of their annual salaries being taxed. About 2.7 per cent. of a man's annual income is collected, the entire sum being kept in a Federal trust fund for payment as benefits.

In legislation for the protection of the health of women workers and minors, and in that concerning accident compensation, the United States has been far behind other industrial countries. It is impossible to say at all exactly how many industrial accidents occur each year in the United States or what their total cost may be, because some states do not gather and publish comprehensive data on the subject and because, among those that do, different standards are employed. Such information as is obtainable indicates that the United States has about twice as high an accident rate as Great Britain, France or Germany, the mines alone causing approximately two thousand deaths per year. Safety campaigns arising from workmen's compensation laws have, however, had a considerable effect in lowering the accident rate.

Except for the part-time selling of newspapers, an occupation which is generally considered to be of value in teaching children how to handle money and is, therefore, engaged in by the sons of well-to-do and poor alike, the average American disapproves of child labour on principle. The principle varies. He may feel that 'You're only young once' and, therefore, want his children to have a good time while they can; he may want them to have a better education than their parents and, therefore, keep them at school as long as possible; or he may object to child labour on the ground that there are unemployed adults who ought not to be robbed of jobs. This last attitude is shared by many employers; in the years just preceding World War II, the mass of the working population was over twenty years of age.

Nevertheless, in certain types of work, such as agriculture or industrial home-work, it is almost impossible to prevent the use of child labour, especially where adult wages are so low that the father alone cannot support his family. The unscrupulous employer, too, welcomes child workers whom he can pay notoriously low wages—sometimes less than a pound a week. Both Federal and state child labour laws exist, but are not always enforced.

Altogether, the United States is neither the Paradise for the worker which many immigrants hoped to find, nor the vast sweatshop full of exploited wage-slaves ruled by Wall Street or that figment of Mr. Goebbels's imagination, a Jew called Rosenfeldt. There are many things in America of which no American can feel proud—poverty, ignorance, insecurity, injustice. There are as many things which are good. And, more important than either, there is hope for better things in the future. The common man, whether his skin be red, black, or white, has faith in himself and in his power to determine the ultimate destiny of his country. He has made mistakes, but he accepts the responsibility. He expects no one else to find the solution to his problems for him. To his fellow-citizens he says, with his countryman, Walt Whitman :

O I see flashing that this America is only you and me,
Its power, weapons, testimony, are you and me,
Its crimes, lies, thefts, defections, are you and me——

I dare not shirk any part of myself,
Not any part of America, good or bad,
Not to build for that which builds for mankind.

The Average American Woman—Smartly Dressed—Woman in the Minority—Marriage as Her Career—Her Status as Wife and Housewife—Working in the House—Other Women-workers—Industry and Women's Unions—Teachers—Women Writers—Political Field open, but not largely entered by Women—Women Film Stars

THE superlatives that are so often applied to American women by visiting foreigners, who confide to newspaper reporters that they find women in the United States the loveliest, the smartest, and the most charming in the world, apply particularly to the types of women visiting foreigners are likely to see. Undoubtedly many women in American cities, including the shop-girls, the typists, and the factory workers, are smartly dressed, but the wives and daughters of share-croppers in the South, the migrant pea-pickers, the housewives who hang their washing on the tenement fire-escapes in the slums can hardly be described as 'chic.' None of the many articles for women in the daily papers discusses the problem of 'How to Dress Well on Nothing a Year.'

Nevertheless, it is true that the majority of American women are better dressed than their counterparts in European countries. Mass-produced ready-made dresses are cut in a greater variety of patterns, with many more variations in size, both as to waist measurements and length, than is customary in England, and the quality of the materials used is high. Every technical advance in textile manufacture produces more varieties of cloth, which can be bought by the yard or in ready-made dresses. The shorthand-typist often wears a smart black dress with touches of white; this she may have bought for as little as twelve shillings. Because of the hot weather, cotton frocks are worn on almost every occasion during the summer; many of them are bought at a cost of from five to eight shillings. Those who want to pay more can, of course, do so. Shoes are like-

wise cheap and are made in a greater number of fittings than British shoes.

It is the cheapness of clothes that makes it possible for the working-women in the United States to dress fashionably, for although they have much social and economic freedom, they have by no means won the battle for equal pay for equal work which is now being fought throughout the world. On the average, over periods covering from twelve to twenty years, women's wages in manufacturing jobs have been less than 60 per cent. of men's, although many employers admit that in certain operations women are more efficient than men and point out that if women were paid the same wages there would not be the prevailing tendency to substitute women workers for men at times when millions of men are unemployed. In general, women have not won for themselves positions of great responsibility, Mrs. Frances Perkins, the United States Secretary of Labor being one of the striking exceptions to this rule. Out of nearly eleven million women employed in 1930, only slightly more than a quarter million were in managerial positions in business.

Behind these statistics, however, is the fact that comparatively few American women are interested in having careers. Not only do their natural instincts lead them to want a home and children, but the entire moral climate of the country encourages a girl to look upon marriage as the only career in which success does not turn to ashes in her mouth. Every popular magazine contains advertisements and articles that deal, directly or indirectly, with the technique of winning a husband. Even those which appear to explain business etiquette or give advice on getting a job carry a fair portion of good counsel on the all-important subject. A university education is considered of equal value to the girl who intends to marry as soon as possible and to the girl who wants to be independent. College sororities shepherd their shy 'sisters' into friendships with men in the 'right' fraternities; churches sponsor social hours for young people of both sexes; the daughters

of the 'Four Hundred' (a term, without mathematical significance, for the socially select) enter the marriage market at a coming-out party or debut which ranges from a small and informal tea-dance to a ball rivalling in costly magnificence any of the elaborate pageants of history.

Undoubtedly the position of women in the United States has been affected by the fact that there have always been fewer women than men in the country. In the early days of the nation's history, men far outnumbered women. Indeed, on one occasion, the French government equipped girls with small chests of clothes and linen and sent them out to New Orleans to provide wives for the pioneer settlers in that town. To-day there are still a million and a half more men than women in the United States.

In a country where co-education has long been the rule and where frontier life made it inevitable that women were to some extent independent and self-sufficient, there is no lack of belief in woman's ability to do a man's job if she likes. An Englishman, writing in 1869, found the American's attitude toward his wife already noteworthy, for he said, "Between the husband and wife in the United States there appears to exist a different relation from that which we find in England. The difference may perhaps be accounted for by supposing that in the United States the husband has more regard for his wife's mind." A wife is not a chattel in the United States, nor is a housewife considered a person without an occupation. Three-fourths of all the women in America are home-makers, and of these 95 per cent. have no paid help in the house. They know, and they have made it clear to other people, that the average housewife spends fifty or more hours per week at work in her home. Her position has been granted the dignity it deserves, for on census forms and other official questionnaires, the housewife's answer to the question 'Occupation or profession' is 'housewife,' and not an ignominious and unfair 'None.'

How do the eleven million women-workers earn their living? In times of peace, about a third of them are in

domestic and personal service, the latter category including a large number of trained operators in beauty and hair-dressing establishments. Between 85 and 90 per cent. of the teachers in public kindergartens and elementary schools are women, and there are many women in secondary school and college teaching. Large numbers of women are employed in manufacturing. The clothing industry alone employs about a million women. Another large group of women workers is composed of clerical workers.

The clerical field has been very overcrowded, and conditions in some offices have become similar to those in factories. Efficiency experts determine how many words or lines a minute a girl should type and she is paid accordingly. Unions of women clerical workers are slowly being formed to protest against the inhumanity of such a system.

In general, women have taken a small part in union activity, but there are two unions representing large numbers of women which are affiliated with neither the A.F.L. nor the C.I.O. One is the International Ladies' Garment Workers, which has about 250,000 members, and the other is the National Federation of Federal Employees, which includes both clerical and professional workers.

Generally speaking, women workers with most education earn the most. Average pre-war weekly earnings of hotel, restaurant, and laundry employees were about £2 10s. Average earnings in manufacturing jobs range from about £3 to £5 and in beauty parlours, from £1 10s. to £5 per week. Teachers earn the highest salaries, with women in other professions a close second.

Admitted that the average woman in America is more interested in having a husband and a home than a career, it is undoubtedly true that those women who are ambitious and interested in their work are less impeded in their progress by an unfriendly or distrustful attitude on the part of male employers than would be the case in many other countries. Women have fine records in many professions. Apart from the large number of successful women authors, there are many women of influence in journalism; for

instance, the editors of *Mademoiselle*, *Life Story Magazine*, *Parents' Magazine*, the *Nation*, *St. Nicholas*, *Theatre Arts*, and *Vogue*. There are women columnists and well-known women foreign correspondents. The historian, Ida M. Tarbell, made history when she first exposed the activities of the Standard Oil Trust in 1912 in a series of articles for McClure's Magazine. Women have gained a particularly strong position in all matters that concern children, and, in publishing, are frequently given full responsibility for the production of juvenile books.

There is, in the United States, as in other countries, some prejudice against married women working. The usual objection is that it is wrong, when many people are unemployed, for both husband and wife to earn a salary. It is interesting to observe, however, that recent efforts to prevent this situation have not discriminated against women. Bills were proposed (and in each case defeated) in Indiana, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin, in 1941, to prohibit the public employment of any person, man or woman, whose spouse is on the public pay-roll or earns more than a given amount, usually \$150 (£37 10s.) per month. A bill proposed in the Federal House of Representatives in 1941 prohibits "discrimination for age, sex, race, or colour against persons employed or seeking employment on national defense or other government contracts." However, in spite of these indications of the development of a more liberal attitude toward the married woman worker, many states forbid the employment of married women as school-teachers and thus close the doors to married women in the profession most favoured by their sex.

In American political and governmental circles, women have possibly had more influence than appears on the surface. Neither the Senate nor the House of Representatives has had many members, there being only one woman Senator and seven women Representatives in the Seventy-Seventh Congress, whose term runs from January 3rd, 1941 to January 3rd, 1943. The first woman Senator was elected in 1932, and later another woman was made chair-

man of the important Senate Committee on the District of Columbia. Women experts have often appeared on the floor of the Senate to give advice on technical matters. There are, of course, many women secretaries in government offices, and many of the Congressional committees have women clerks. Indeed, nearly half of the government employees in Washington in peace-time were women.

The first woman to represent the United States at a foreign court was Ruth Bryan Owen, Minister to Denmark from 1933 to 1936. Later, Mrs. Harriman served as Minister to Norway.

In 1938 the first Negro woman legislator was elected to office in Philadelphia.

Under the Roosevelt Administration, both the Director and the Assistant Director of the Bureau of the Mint are women, the former being Mrs. Nellie Taylor Ross, who was previously governor of the state of Wyoming. No woman has ever been appointed a Judge of the Supreme Court, but there is one woman judge among the fifty-seven who preside over the Federal Circuit Courts of Appeal.

The examinations of the Civil Service Commission are open to members of both sexes. In general the lower grade positions are much sought after because the salaries paid by the government are higher than those for corresponding positions outside the service. Of technical and administrative posts the opposite is true, with the result that candidates are always in short supply.

Although women who become Hollywood film stars may appear to be average enough before they reach their pinnacle—and film-struck working-girls never forget that less than a year before she reached stardom Dorothy Lamour was a lift-girl in a Chicago department store—the conditions in which they work and the salaries they receive are anything but average.

While 45 per cent. of the actors in the movie colony earn less than \$4,000 (£1,000) per year, the fact that prestige in Hollywood is measured entirely by the size of the pay-cheque has gradually forced upward the salary levels, not

only of those who act, but of directors, producers, and even, in late years, of script writers. Mr. Leo C. Rosten in his recent study of Hollywood, estimates that at least 850 persons earned \$20,000 or more annually in 1939, 1940, and 1941, and such stars as Claudette Colbert, the late Carole Lombard, Bing Crosby, and Gary Cooper have been paid from \$100,000 to \$150,000 per picture.

But Hollywood incomes bear no relation to incomes in other spheres, as is well illustrated by the fact that the chairman of filmdom's own censorship office (generally known as the Hays Office) has an annual salary twice that of the President of the United States. That is a modest figure in an industry in which a producer is said to have met a demand for a new \$40,000 stage set with the remark, "\$40,000 here, \$40,000 there—say, it adds up!"

It is to be expected that actresses earn as much as the men, or more, while they are at the height of their popularity, but box-office appeal can vanish as suddenly as it came, taking with it the six-figure income. Sometimes the glamour girl or boy accomplishes the nearly impossible and succeeds in spending his entire salary. But usually even the more extravagant stars save considerable sums on which to live during their less glamorous middle and old age. Women have been among the most successful in taking care of the fortunes they earned in the films, frequently investing them in California property. Marion Davies, Norma Talmadge, Corinne Griffiths and Constance Bennett are among those who made their savings the basis on which to build successful careers in business.

Object of the Constitution of the United States to Maintain Government for the People—The Constitution adopted in 1787 still efficient in handling to-day's Greater Problems—Congress, President, Supreme Court, their Values—Electing Senators and Representatives—The President's Powers and Duties—The Cabinet—State Rights and Federal Rights

IT will perhaps surprise those who have been accustomed to think of the United States as a country in which criminals compete with each other in defying the forces of order, and politics are rife with graft, to learn that not only has government by law been the ideal on which the entire political structure is based, but that it is an ideal which has to a very great extent been attained. The experiences of the colonists of the eighteenth century had bred a deep distrust of political leaders and they sought, in framing the constitutions both of the individual states and of the Federal government, to prevent any person or group of persons from ever gaining sufficient control over the country to be able to govern purely for their own ends.

The American Constitution is a written document. It lays down definitely the powers of the Federal government, and those which are reserved for the individual states and for the people themselves. It is possible to disagree about its meaning, but the text is there for all time. This effort to safeguard the rights of the people by basing government on a document, not on something which exists only in men's minds, has had remarkable success.

When the Constitution of the United States was adopted in 1787, the country was less than one-third of its present size, and had a population which was only a small fraction of its present hundred and thirty millions. Industrialization had only begun; transportation was difficult and travelling not only uncomfortable but often dangerous. Each of the thirteen colonies had been in truth a sovereign

state and was determined to remain so, in that respect resembling the nations which joined the League of Nations. Only in its faith in democracy, and in its conviction that unity was vital, was the first Congress of the United States like the seventy-seventh Congress of more than a century and a half later.

Nevertheless, the seventy-seventh Congress functions today under the plan drawn up so long ago. The President, called upon to solve problems undreamt of in 1787, is granted the power to do so in words which are as alive in 1942 as in those months in 1787 in which the members of the Constitutional Convention laboured to give final expression to the ideas which for fifteen years had been simmering in every colonial mind.

Although Americans are accustomed to call the War of Independence 'the American Revolution,' the Revolution really continued for many years after the end of that war. The winning of independence was one step; the formulation of the Constitution was another; the growth of a tradition in the manner of interpreting the written word, still a third. And the American Revolution still continues, for no one can say with complete certainty that the democratic form of government established in the United States will survive every trial to which it is subjected.

Many of the problems which had to be solved by the framers of the Constitution had already been met in one way or another by the men who had framed the constitutions of the individual states. Their decisions had to be considered because it was clear that the citizens of no state would be prepared to give up the rights they had already been granted.

Such a problem was found in the franchise. Conservatives opposed the granting of the right to vote to citizens who owned no property, fearing that they would use it to despoil their more fortunate fellow-countrymen. However, many states had already granted the franchise to citizens who had no property and would have refused to ratify any new constitution which did not at least permit

this. Consequently, in this as in other matters, the Constitution incorporated what was considered in 1787 to be a dangerously radical point of view—one reason why the document has worn so well.

The Constitution begins with that famous 'Preamble' which sets forth the purposes for which the government was established :

We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Then follows Article I, which sets up, and defines the duties, powers, and composition of, a Congress of the United States, composed of two Houses, the Senate, and the House of Representatives. Article II concerns the President ; Article III, the Supreme Court ; Article IV, the individual States ; V, the passage of Amendments to the Constitution ; VI, the supremacy of the Constitution over State law, and VII, the ratification of the Constitution. There are, in addition, twenty-one Amendments to the Constitution.

In their effort to prevent the seizure of power by any individual or group, the men who wrote the Constitution set up three departments of activity, each designed to act in some way as a brake upon the others. Broadly speaking, the power of making laws was vested in Congress, the power of executing the law in the President, and the judicial power in the Supreme Court.

But the actual situation is far more complex than so bald a summary indicates. The President to a large extent shares the power of making laws, for he has the right to veto a bill that has been passed by both the House of Representatives and by the Senate, thus preventing it from becoming a law unless it is passed again by a two-thirds majority of both Houses.

Furthermore, the judicial powers of the Supreme Court are such that it has the right to find a new law unconstitutional and, therefore, null and void, and it can thus curb both President and Congress in their legislative activities. The Supreme Court does not, of course, deal in any way with proposed legislation, and it can make a decision regarding the constitutionality of a law only when a case is brought before it, such as, for instance, that of a citizen who refuses to obey a law which he regards as unjust.

Of the two Houses of Congress, the Senate is the smaller and the more powerful. Each of the forty-eight states, whatever its size or population, has two members in the Senate. On the other hand, membership in the House of Representatives is granted to states in accordance with the size of their population, New York having a representation of forty-five members, while the least populated states in the Union have only one each.

This arrangement, designed to placate the vociferous representatives of scantily populated states at the Constitutional Convention, has had untold influence on the course of American history. In order for a bill to become law, it must be approved by a majority in each house. In the Senate, representatives of very small minorities—the citizens of the comparatively empty great plains states, for instance—have quite as much power as the men who represent the millions crowded into industrial states. Sectional interests are usually at variance in a country of continental proportions, where only the issue of war in self-defence can unite the farmers, the industrialists, the urban dwellers and the folk in the backwoods, all the many types of workers who ordinarily regard each other as political enemies.

Individual Senators are elected to legislate first for the benefit of the state which they represent: it is their responsibility also to legislate for the benefit of the nation as a whole. In matters of foreign policy, the point of view of the Middle or Far Western Senator is likely to be very different from that of his colleagues who repre-

sent the states along the Atlantic seaboard, and the point of view of the Senator from the coast is not necessarily that of the diplomats who draft a treaty. Since a treaty does not become binding unless two-thirds of the Senate have ratified it, the wonder is not that the United States has sometimes shown such reluctance to sign treaties but that she has signed so many.

Senators are elected for a six-year term, and only one-third of them are elected at a time. The entire membership of the House of Representatives is elected at two-year intervals, the House, as an entity, thus dying every two years. Compared with the Senate, it is, therefore, at a disadvantage, for although the membership of the Senate changes to some extent every two years, the Senate has a permanent existence. Both Houses maintain standing committees of inquiry, such as the Martin Dies Committee, which investigates and reports on un-American activities in the United States, and numerous committees on child welfare, housing conditions, etc.

The founding fathers thought of the Senate as an incubator for presidents, but, in fact, only one senator has been elected President, Warren Harding, the dark horse of the 1920 election.

The Senate enjoys a degree of dignity and popular prestige which is not granted the House of Representatives. Despite the use of the 'filibuster' (the method of preventing the passage of a law by talking steadily for as long as is necessary to reach the time at which Congress must adjourn) the Senate generally keeps its mind on its work, gives every member opportunities to speak if he desires, and is careful to have published in the Congressional Record only what is actually said in a Senate session.

Members of the House of Representatives, on the other hand, often ask and are granted permission to amplify speeches made in the House when they are published in the Record, or even to publish speeches which were never delivered, reporting with them such comments as "Applause," and "Prolonged applause."

A seat in Congress is never a sinecure, especially in these days when every pressure group in the country constantly urges its supporters to "write to your Congressman about it." Sometimes the letters of such minorities arrive in such quantities that a Congressman must pay a hasty visit to his constituency to ascertain the true bent of public opinion.

Taking its labours seriously, Congress has also granted itself more than nominal payment for its hard work. In addition to a salary of \$10,000 per year (now subject to slight reductions), members receive secretarial allowances and offices.

As the terms of office of President, Vice-President, and Congressmen are laid down in the Constitution, they could not be prolonged, even in stress of war, without an Amendment to the Constitution. For an Amendment to be adopted, it must be ratified by two-thirds of both Houses of Congress, or, exceptionally, by three-quarters of the State legislatures. The American fear of dictatorship and zeal for civil liberties would prevent such an Amendment from obtaining sufficient support, even if conditions were abnormal enough for it to be proposed.

Congress, like the President, is given both specific and general powers by the Constitution. The specific powers include those of coining money, regulating commerce with foreign nations and between the states, establishing post-offices, securing to authors and inventors copyright and patents, establishing lesser tribunals, declaring war, raising and supporting armies, providing and maintaining a navy, and governing exclusively the District of Columbia, in which Washington is situated. General powers are granted "To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or any department or office thereof."

The powers granted to the President by the Constitution are both specific and general. He is the administrative head of the nation. He is Commander-in-Chief of the

Army and Navy. He may "require the opinion in writing, of the principal officer in each of the executive departments, upon any subject relating to the duties of their respective offices, and he shall have power to grant reprieves and pardons for offences against the United States, except in cases of impeachment." In addition to these, the President has power to make treaties, but only "by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and provided that two-thirds of the Senators present concur," a very important provision and one which has had much effect on the foreign policy of the United States. The President also appoints ambassadors, consuls, and other public officials, including the judges of the Supreme Court, again with the advice and consent of the Senate, and he may be given the sole right, by Congress, to appoint inferior officers.

The duties of the President are from time to time to "give to the Congress information of the state of the Union and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient," a duty fulfilled by the now traditional "President's Message" usually read to Congress at the beginning of a session by the President's representative, but recently delivered by the President in person. The President is also required to summon members of Congress to extra sessions when the need arises, to receive ambassadors and other public ministers, and to "take care that the laws be faithfully executed."

Every American child meets at some stage in his school career the magic-sounding word, 'STWAPNIACL' by which mnemonic device teachers impress upon their pupils the list of Cabinet officers who, in order of the seniority of their department, would become temporary head of the nation in the event of the deaths of President and Vice-President. Members of the Cabinet are the Secretary of State, who corresponds to the British Foreign Secretary and who is popularly considered to be second in importance to the President; the Secretary of the Treasury (Chancellor of the Exchequer); the Secretary of War; the Attorney-General; the Postmaster-General; the Secretary of the

Navy; the Secretary of the Interior (Home Secretary); Secretary of Agriculture; Secretary of Commerce; and Secretary of Labour. There is no Secretary of the Air Force because the air force of the United States is attached to the Army and the Navy.

Members of the Cabinet cannot be members of Congress and have no direct contact with either House. Appointed by the President, they are solely responsible to him. Although it has become customary for the Cabinet to meet with the President at least once a week, he is under no obligation to follow the advice they may offer.

President Roosevelt broke with tradition in consulting, in addition to his first Cabinet, several university professors and other experts, and it was this group of advisers which became known as the 'Brain Trust' in America.

In the Constitution, the states are expressly denied such rights as entering into any treaty, alliance, or confederation, coining money, and granting any title of nobility. There are certain other powers, such as keeping troops or ships of war in time of peace, which they can exercise only with the consent of Congress. The Ninth and Tenth Amendments, adopted in 1791, reserve to the states or to the people rights that are not enumerated in the Constitution, and are a part of the Bill of Rights (the name given to the first ten Amendments).

Thus it happens that such an act as the Wages and Hours Act, which was passed by Congress in 1938, cannot be enforced in many spheres where power of legislation is retained solely by the state. If, for instance, children under the age of eighteen are known to be working in conditions forbidden by the Federal government, but are producing goods which never go beyond the boundaries of the state in which they work, the Federal government can do nothing. However, comparatively few products are consumed solely within the state in which they are produced, and a broad interpretation of the right of Congress to regulate commerce between the states has made it possible for Congress to correct abuses permitted by backward states.

The question of states' rights versus Federal rights cannot be settled permanently one way or another while changing conditions bring new incentives for breaking convention. While neither the Republican nor the Democratic party now stands united in defence of states' rights, the tendency of states to obtain revenue by levying purchase taxes on all goods bought from retailers within their boundaries has brought the old problem very much to the fore.

If State *A* levies a 3 per cent. purchase tax while the adjacent state, *B*, does not, residents of State *A* will inevitably go to State *B* to make large purchases whenever the cost of transportation is less than the amount payable as a tax. In order to prevent such loss of trade within the state, can the legislators in State *A* levy a 3 per cent. tax on new goods brought by individuals into the state after being purchased outside? At this point, the state purchase tax begins to bear a strong resemblance to a customs duty, and the Constitution declares that "No tax or duty shall be laid on articles exported from any State." Controversy over this matter raged during the 1930's; even now the problem is not entirely solved, although the imposition of a 10 per cent. Federal purchase tax to obtain revenue for defence has discouraged states which had hoped to raise money in the same way.

The general trend in American government, however, is toward increased centralization of power. Furthermore, where Federal legislation cannot be enforced, its example may be sufficient to bring about reforms in state law. Indirect pressure toward reform may also result. For instance, when a factory, operated under the standards of the Wages and Hours Act, draws labour away from adjacent factories which pay lower wages and work longer hours, the latter may be obliged to raise their standards to the approved level.

The American's Loyalty to the State—The State is not Sovereign—Roads, Prohibition, Marriage and Divorce, Schools, State Taxation and Income Tax differ from State to State—How the State is Governed—The Battle against Graft—Local and Rural Government—The Political Parties—How the Voting Proceeds

HOWEVER great the debt of gratitude the American owes to Thomas Jefferson—and the debt is immeasurable for it was largely Jefferson's faith in the common man that ensured the establishment of political democracy—he cannot fail to be glad that Jefferson's names for the states soon to come into the Union were rejected. Controversy may arise over the pronunciation of Iowa, Arkansas, or Colorado, but these names have many virtues in comparison with the hybrids he suggested: Assenisippia, Polypotamia, Michigania, and Pelisipia. It is right that the names of so many of the states have an unpretentious air, for to Americans they are words that suggest home. Even in these days, when millions of Americans have travelled from coast to coast, local and state loyalty is strong and in time of peace matters of state government are considered quite as important as those of the Federal government.

Mr. Herbert Agar has remarked that although the American is fond of referring to the rights of the 'sovereign state,' the states of the Union are not in fact sovereign, and the word when used in this connection has lost all meaning. The truth of his statement is obvious; no state is sovereign which cannot coin its own money, raise its own army or fight its own wars.

Nevertheless, the answer to a question once put to me by a schoolboy in England, "Does it make any difference when you cross the state boundary?" is an emphatic, "Yes." If one is travelling by car, one may, for instance, notice an immediate difference in the quality of the road, for the

activities of the state highway commissions may be productive in one instance and, in the other, merely expensive. Going from one state to another may mean entering an area in which a person may drink alcoholic beverages in public only if he is sitting down, as in Michigan, or even entering one in which Prohibition still reigns; for although the Volstead Act imposed Prohibition on the entire country, the Repeal Act left it to individual states to decide for themselves whether they were to be 'wet' or 'dry.' Among the states which chose the latter are Tennessee, Vermont and Kansas.

Of great importance are the laws concerning marriage and divorce, both of which are in the province of state governments. In some states it is impossible to obtain a marriage licence (necessary for both religious and civil ceremonies) without giving advance notice. A few states require prospective brides and bridegrooms to produce a medical certificate showing them to be free of venereal diseases. Towns immediately within the borders of states without such requirements often become local Gretna Greens, their justices of the peace earning a sizable income solely by marrying in haste those who have no fear of repenting at leisure.

State regulations concerning divorce are even more varied. If Congress had power to pass laws controlling divorce there would be no divorce mill in Reno, Nevada or in Miami, Florida, Reno's most dangerous rival in the trade. With state control, however, it is more difficult to obtain a divorce in New York than it is in England, whereas in Reno six weeks' residence and the complaint of mental cruelty or incompatibility are sufficient—and the term 'mental cruelty' may refer to a husband's habit of leaving a ring around the bath or to the agony caused by a wife's high-pitched laughter. In Reno, divorce is big business and it pays.

It is not big business everywhere, however, and there are still far more people in America who look forward to celebrating their silver or golden wedding anniversaries than

who sue each other for a divorce. It may even be said that the possibility of easy divorce has made many young Americans take marriage more seriously than before. Young women in particular are warned in the popular Press, in women's magazines, and in lectures, that more than 90 per cent. of marriage failures are the fault of the woman and that, therefore, no bride who has got her man can afford to rest on her laurels and assume that a successful marriage will inevitably result.

There are many other spheres in which the state government is active. There is no American equivalent of the British Board of Education and the public schools are under state control. The speed at which a car may be driven, the cost of a driver's licence, the amount of tax levied on car and petrol in addition to Federal taxes, all of these things are determined by the state.

The conditions under which people work often depend on state legislation. For instance, in 1940, four states had no minimum hours laws for women workers and, therefore, only women employed on production that came under the Federal Wages and Hours Act were protected against having to work an eleven- or twelve-hour day. Oregon and Pennsylvania, on the other hand, have a forty-four-hour week for women workers.

Some states, where property values are high, impose heavy real estate taxes. Income taxes are imposed by states in addition to those levied by the Federal government.

The Federal Constitution guarantees to every state a republican form of government, and the machinery of state government follows the Washington model in all states except Nebraska, which has a one-chamber legislature. The administrative head of the state is the governor, who is elected by the people for a term which varies between two and four years. The state governor may have a Cabinet appointed by himself, although in some states the principal officers and heads of departments are, like himself, chosen by popular vote. The equivalent of Congress has various names in the states: Virginia has a House of Burgesses, while

other states have a General Assembly or a State Legislature. These consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives.

The state governorship has proved more valuable as a stepping-stone to the presidency of the United States than has any other political office. Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and Franklin D. Roosevelt all went from a governor's mansion to the White House.

Each state has a political capital, which, like Washington, may be a political and administrative centre only, or the industrial centre of the state as well. Thus the political capital of New York is Albany, not New York City; that of Illinois, Springfield, not Chicago; that of California, Sacramento, not Los Angeles or San Francisco. But Des Moines, Iowa is an important commercial centre as well; so are Salt Lake City, Utah and Denver, Colorado.

Hollywood, which has frequently given world-wide publicity to the less admirable aspects of American life, has done its bit in advertising the part played by graft in American politics. That there has been plenty of opportunity (and little of it wasted) for political chicanery in the United States cannot be denied. Even the Federal administration was tarred with that brush during the presidency of Ulysses S. Grant and that of Warren G. Harding, although neither President was guilty.

No American is indifferent to his country's reputation for producing dishonest politicians, nor is he ignorant of the fact that corruption has often been condoned by an informed but tolerant public. But he realizes, too, that scandal and publicity are Siamese twins, and that there are many cases of disinterested and efficient political action which are hardly known except to those directly affected by them. Reform may be slow and non-violent.

For instance, Tammany Hall, the political machine which long ruled New York, has steadily fought a losing battle against Reform Mayor Fiorello La Guardia. The extent to which local politics in New York have been cleaned up is revealed by a comparison of two facts. The first is given in the autobiography of Mr. Al Smith, former governor of

New York. Mr. Smith states that twenty-five years ago, when he was Sheriff of one of the five counties over which spreads the vast City, he received a salary of \$12,000 a year plus half the fees collected. During his two years in office, the fees amounted to about \$105,000, although his duties involved 'only strictly routine work.'

In contrast comes the report that in the autumn election of 1941, the voters of New York City abolished the costly offices of Sheriff and Register of Deeds in each county and transferred their duties to a single sheriff and a single register for the entire city, these officers to be appointed by the mayor from the three candidates receiving the highest standing in a competitive civil service examination. The campaign was probably unique, for Reform candidates for the positions now abolished stood for the elimination of those offices and promised not to take office if they were elected.

In local, as opposed to Federal or state government, recent years have seen much experiment, particularly in urban areas. Many cities are governed by a mayor and a city council or board of aldermen, councillors or aldermen being elected by residents in the wards which they represent, while the mayor is elected by voters throughout the entire city. The commission form of government has been more popular with small towns—'cities' in America, though in England they could not aspire to so dignified a title.

A city commission is a popularly elected board of five or six men, presided over by an elected mayor. Each commissioner supervises a department of local government—for instance, the care of streets and highways or of public health. In addition, the commission meets as a body at regular intervals, its sessions being open to the public. However, although what the film critics call the "entertainment value" of a small-town commission meeting is sometimes high, they rarely attract a large audience.

The American business man considers himself a model of efficiency and a desire to make city government as efficient as a well-run industrial firm has resulted in the adoption in many districts of the city manager form of

government. The city manager is a trained professional administrator who is paid to manage the affairs of the city exactly as he might be paid to run a factory. Under this system, the elected mayor and commission merely decide matters of general policy. However, in spite of its excellence in theory, the city manager system has proved to be no more proof against dubious political practice than any other system.

Rural government in the United States is usually neither efficient nor progressive. Reform proposals almost always include amalgamation of several districts and are, therefore, unwelcome to small politicians whose offices would be eliminated. Local elections arouse intense partisan feeling, with slanderous pamphlets mysteriously flooding the town, rumours (usually false) of fistic combats between the candidates flying from one end of Main Street to the other, and much high-minded oratory emanating from the villagers loafing round the stove in the general store. "It is time," they all agree, "to stop all this mudslinging in every election campaign. A sense of moral decency demands it, and what's more, if that low-down, squint-eyed, knock-kneed, rabbit-eared skunk of a lying (Republican or Democrat) thinks he can get by with libel—that's what it is—libel, we'll show him!"

Whether or not it is because political rivals enjoy calling each other names before the elections and then forget about it when the elections are over, libel suits resulting from rural election campaigns are extremely rare, whereas the accusations made annually at election time by apparently respectable citizens against their equally respectable fellow townsmen almost pass belief.

Hitherto all attempts to break the two-party system which governs American politics have failed to gain widespread success, although here and there a third party has made a strong stand in local or state elections. In spite of the fairly typical remark made fifty years ago by a Republican about the Democratic party, "The Democratic party is like a mule—without pride of ancestry or hope of pos-

terity," both parties have a long history, during the course of which they stood opposed on issues now forgotten or over which party lines have become blurred.

The Democratic party was originally an alliance of two geographical areas, the South and the West, and of two classes of voters, small farmers and city workers. In the middle of the nineteenth century, the party split because the Southern element in it demanded that everything else in party policy be sacrificed to the protection of slavery. Out of the ensuing turmoil emerged the victorious Republican party, which consisted of a combination, frequently uneasy, of the Western farmers who had left the Democratic fold and of the industrial and commercial leaders of the East.

In the South, of course, the Republican party was known as the niggers' party, and the states which had seceded and then lost the Civil War became 'the solid South,' solidly Democrat. The New England states became quite as solidly Republican. In the long period of Republican domination of the political scene, people learned to say, "As Maine goes, so goes the nation," because Maine always went Republican, and the country did too. But the time came when only Maine and Vermont voted for the Republican candidate for the Presidency, while east, west, and south, the votes fell to Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

In 1942, the sleepwalking voter who automatically follows the family tradition belongs to a species which is dying slowly, though it is as yet far from being extinct. President Roosevelt's political programme has never been one which voters could regard with indifference, nor has it been one which followed orthodox Democratic theory. The Republicans, who for the first time in their lives voted Democrat in 1932, included millions of fully or partly unemployed in desperate need. They chose, not the Democratic party, but Roosevelt himself, with his confidence, his buoyant humour, and his insistence on the importance of doing something for 'the forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid.'

But in 1936, the people were no longer voting for a man, a personality; they were voting for or against the New Deal. And the New Deal cut across both parties. In spite of the early mistakes of Roosevelt's Administration, there were many Republicans, particularly among those who had gravitated even temporarily from the professional to the working-classes, who approved the new programme. On the other hand, prosperous, property-owning Democrats, even in the South, bitterly opposed the social security and labour legislation of the New Deal.

In the 1940 election campaign foreign policy was kept out of the picture to some degree by the similarity of stand taken by Wilkie and Roosevelt, and it was once more made clear that if the terms Democrat and Republican continue to be used, they will come to mean something other than the party one was born into. Roosevelt's New Deal Democrats and the Republican converts may become a unified liberal-radical party, while the opposition Democrats may unite with the die-hard Republicans to carry the banner of conservatism.

The sectional predominance of one party or the other and the failure of any third party such as the Progressive Party in Wisconsin or the Farmer-Labour Party in Minnesota to gain influence over a wider area have resulted in almost country-wide legislation controlling the selection of party candidates. In a solidly Democratic state a Republican candidate for office has no chance whatsoever of winning an election. The real contest lies between the various Democratic candidates, and it is to protect the right of the voter to exercise his vote that the state regulates the raising and spending of party funds and holds a primary election, in which the party candidates are chosen. If the voter were not given the opportunity of choosing the party candidates, the man chosen behind the scenes by the dominant party (the Democratic in Alabama, the Republican in Maine) would automatically take office whether he in any way represented the people's choice or not.

There are two types of primaries in common use: the

direct primary, in which each voter registers as a Republican or a Democrat and chooses his candidates (one for each office) from those listed by that party; and the open primary, which is run off exactly like the real election, with parties voting together, and the individual voter being able to vote a split ticket—that is, choose one candidate from the Republican party, another from the Democratic, and a third from any local Farmer-Worker or Independent party that may for the moment exist. A candidate whose name was not on the primary ballot but who decides to stand for office in the final election may ‘run on slips’ if a sufficiently large number of supporters sign a petition asking him to enter the contest. My personal impression, however, of the chances of such a candidate to defeat his longer established opponents is that he is likely to do more slipping than running.

Its Strength—A System of Check and Double-Check—The Supreme Court checks Congress—How President Roosevelt contrived to check the Supreme Court—Weaknesses in Constitution—The Poll Tax—The President may not always represent Popular Vote—Does the Locality Rule mean a Wastage of Leaders?—Public Positions as Political Prizes in the State—General Working of Constitution is Fairly Efficient—The Citizen is trained to Vote—Criminals, Efforts to improve Their Outlook

IT was Mr. Dooley, the popular philosopher, who once said, "No matter whether th' Constitution follows th' flag or not, th' Supreme Court follows th' illicition returns." Mr. Dooley was right, but sometimes the Supreme Court follows very slowly. Indeed, when the policy of the Federal Government made a *volte face* at the beginning of the Roosevelt regime, the Supreme Court dug its heels into the ground and firmly refused to move. The result was that out of 25 cases decided between 1935 and 1937, the Supreme Court declared that 14 laws which had been passed by Congress and the President were unconstitutional and, therefore, null and void.

Among these were both the National Industrial Recovery Act (N.I.R.A.) and the Agricultural Adjustment Administration Act (A.A.A.), measures which were of great importance to the New Deal, and for the execution of which elaborate organizations had been established. Americans, accustomed to thinking of the Supreme Court as a body of nine old men, awoke to the realization that if their country was governed by law and the law could be nullified by the Supreme Court, those nine old men whose very names they had forgotten could govern the country.

It was a startling discovery. Of course, everyone had learned at school that the American system of government was a system of check and double-check ; that each House



Ploughing in Southern California



Transport in the Rockies
Burros carry silver ore from the Colorado mines.





Black Star and Wide World photo

Recreation

Within America, land of contrasts, there is great variety of climate, scenery and sport.

Above) The traffic trail. Along Sawmill River Parkway streams of motorists go from New York to the countryside.

of Congress could use its power effectively to curb the action of the other; that the powers of Congress and the President were balanced in a similar way; and that, finally, the Constitution stated that "The judicial power shall extend to all cases, in law and equity, arising under this Constitution." Furthermore, two Amendments, the Fifth and the Fourteenth, limited the action of Federal and state governments by forbidding them to "deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law." Using the power thus granted to it, the Supreme Court had in the past handed down decisions upholding the Federal Government against the states, the states against the Federal Government, and, in some cases, the rights of private enterprise against either. But at no time had public opinion been roused more thoroughly than it was with regard to the New Deal legislation.

The President had been elected by an overwhelming majority of the popular vote on a platform promising, among other things, labour legislation, the restoration of agriculture, old age and unemployment insurance legislation, and the regulation of holding companies. The National Industrial Recovery Act and the Agricultural Adjustment Administration had been designed to fulfil those promises. When the Supreme Court declared these and other measures void, New Dealers felt the earth shake.

The facts that the N.I.R.A. had proved to have been too hastily planned to be practical and the A.A.A. had in some ways been a failure were of little importance. What really mattered was that every citizen began to wonder how he would know when a law really was a law. If Congress enacted another measure limiting hours of work, did one have to obey it or would the Supreme Court decide that the Federal government had once more invaded the rights of the individual? Opponents of the President's policy sometimes chose to assume that it would and they acted accordingly. Honest and bewildered citizens tried to understand what was the test which the Court applied to a law.

Even to the layman it is clear that the wording of the

Constitution is frequently ambiguous and admits of several interpretations. "No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States." What are the privileges and immunities of a citizen? Is working fourteen hours a day in a mine an inviolable privilege of citizenship? "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution . . . are reserved to the States respectively or to the people." Has the Federal government the right to enact legislation controlling child labour, is this a power "reserved to the States," or is the use of child labour one of the privileges of citizens?

The Supreme Court, in interpreting the Constitution, admits that many opinions on its meaning are tenable and that Congress has the right to pass laws based on any 'reasonable' interpretation of the Constitution. Its task when reviewing legislation is to decide whether the interpretation upon which the legislation is based is reasonable. What is reasonable and what is not is a matter of opinion. So it comes about that the law of the land is finally determined by the political faith of this small group of men.

Who appoints the judges of the Supreme Court? The President. For how long? For life, 'on good behaviour.' What sort of men does he appoint? Distinguished lawyers who are known to share his own political and social views, which may mean men of his own party and, in the present confusion, may not. Obviously, if he chose men with strongly conflicting views, there would be less possibility of their deciding that laws passed by his administration were reasonable.

During the twelve years between the Wilson and Roosevelt Administrations, the White House was occupied by a series of conservative Republican presidents, Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover. Naturally, their appointees to the Supreme Court had been conservative Republicans. Conservative Republicans, whether on the bench or in the street, have never found much that was 'reasonable' in the programme followed by the New Dealers.

However, President Roosevelt determined to try to break the power of this antagonistic Court, and asked Congress to reorganize the Federal judiciary. As part of the reform he suggested that the President be allowed to appoint a new justice to the Supreme Court for every one who did not retire at the age of 70, the total number of judges not to exceed 15. In this way, he hoped to obtain a majority of liberals in the Court. However, on hearing this proposal, the entire nation rose in wrath. The Supreme Court, right or wrong, was the Supreme Court, and, like the Constitution, sacred.

But in the end, he had his wish. Resignation and deaths cleared the way to the appointment of Rooseveltian liberals and, since 1936, the social legislation brought forward by the administration has been, with few exceptions, declared valid. The Americans who voted for Roosevelt in 1940 were no longer worried about whether or not the Supreme Court had too much power; so long as that power is used to support legislation approved by the people the question is shelved. The problems of a future day may bring it once more to the fore.

There are other questions of political practice which remain unsettled. One of these concerns the poll-tax which is still levied upon voters in ten of the forty-eight states, although it brings a very small revenue (a total of less than \$7,000,000 in 1940).

Originally the poll-tax was designed to prevent the newly enfranchised but uneducated Negroes in southern states from voting, because their ignorance made them the easy dupes of political racketeers. It has never been removed, however, and now effectively disenfranchises the poor, black and white alike. Not only is the tax of a dollar a year a heavy one for people who see very little cash from one year's end to the next, but the tax is cumulative and when a person has ceased to pay it, he cannot vote again in any except local elections until he has paid the full tax for the period during which he did not vote. Many young men and women who reached their majority during the years of

the depression were unemployed until they were twenty-five or twenty-six years old. By that time they had to pay five dollars before they could vote, and what should have been one of the rights of citizenship had been transformed into a too expensive luxury.

Another weakness in the American system is that which permits the election to the Presidency of a man who has received fewer popular votes than his opponent. The method of electing the President which is outlined in the Constitution has largely failed in practice. The Constitution decrees that the President be chosen, not by the people directly, but by a group of electors chosen by the people. Each state has as many electors as it has members in Congress. In theory, these electors have the right to vote according to their own desires. Actually, their powers are purely nominal and they are obliged to vote in accordance with the will of the majority of their state, even when that majority is a very narrow one.

Thus, a candidate may receive a large number of popular votes, but if he loses a state by a hair, all the electoral votes go to his opponent. In a close contest, a repetition of this situation in many states can mean that the man who becomes President does so because he secured a majority of electoral votes, whereas his opponent secured fewer electoral votes supported by a large popular majority in each state. It has once happened in the past that the candidate with the majority of the popular vote was thus defeated.

Other defects in the American system are the result of the locality rule and the failure of any third party to gain national importance. The Constitution decrees that members of Congress must be residents of the states they represent, and it has become the accepted custom for representatives to live in the Congressional district which they represent. A man whose political beliefs were opposed to the immediate advantage of voters in his own state could never gain a seat in Congress, though they might well be beneficial to the country as a whole.

The combination of the locality rule and the two-party

system means that a stalwart and able Republican cannot aspire to election in a Democratic district, and vice versa, nor is he eligible to stand for office elsewhere. Americans find it hard to believe that a Congressman who does not live in the state he represents would understand the problems of his constituents or work as hard on their behalf as he does when his own interests as a local resident and taxpayer are involved.

A final criticism, often levelled at America by those accustomed to the high standard of British administration, is that the civil service is inadequate. Of the Federal civil service this cannot truthfully be said, but under the state governments public positions, both high and low, are only too often the prizes of the political game. Continuity and integrity of administration are difficult under such a system, but the vested interest of the politician who rewards his supporters with state jobs, stands in the way of reform.

In spite of these flaws, however, the governmental machinery of the United States works fairly efficiently. Furthermore, in the greater part of the country, the average citizen is aware of his responsibilities as a voter. As a child, he becomes acquainted with the method of voting; whether it be by use of pencil or voting machine, and long before he has reached the age of twenty-one, has voted for Congressmen and President in the school 'election.' As an adult, he has frequent opportunities for exercising the right to vote: for the members of the school board in his school district, for local government officers, for county officers, for state officers, and finally for members of Congress and the President and Vice-President of the nation. In addition, the primary system doubles the number of elections in which the conscientious voter casts his ballot.

Fairly efficient, too, despite the publicity given to spectacular crime, is the administration of criminal law. Here also Federal and state authorities have separate functions: there are Federal offences and state offences, Federal police and state police, Federal courts and state courts, and Federal prisons and state prisons.

Federal offences range from treason to kidnapping and from income-tax evasion to postal fraud. Prosecution for tax evasion has sometimes proved more effective at the hands of the Federal courts than prosecution for some other charge has at the hands of the state courts. Al Capone, one-time Public Enemy No. 1, for instance, was convicted of evading income-tax and sentenced to a long term in the 'Big House' after a career involving far more spectacular crime.

Postal frauds are probably the most frequent of all Federal offences. Perhaps the classic was that perpetrated by an individual who advertised the sale of genuine steel-engravings of the portrait of George Washington at a dollar each. Orders from patriots poured in and the steel-engravings were duly despatched. They were two-cent postage stamps, each bearing the portrait of the Father of His Country, a genuine steel-engraving, as advertised, but worth only two cents for all that.

There are eleven Federal penitentiaries in which those who are guilty of offences against the Federal government are confined, that on Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay being popularly considered the most formidable.

The infliction of capital punishment for murder is a matter for the states to decide and, in many, life imprisonment is the extreme penalty. The labours of prison reformers such as Wardens Mott-Osborne and Lawes have borne fruit except in the South. The state of Georgia, where chain-gangs still work on the roads, each convict having one leg chained to a heavy iron ball, has (according to the report of the Citizens Fact Finding Movement) "two or three times as many men and women in prison as the average of the forty-eight states."

For the most part, such medieval methods of punishment have given way to efforts to rehabilitate the criminal and make him a useful member of society. Prison workshops manufacture goods for the general market, the only condition imposed on their sale being that they must be labelled 'Prison manufactured.' Education programmes of wide

scope are carried on in both state and Federal prisons so that a prisoner may equip himself to earn an honest living when he has served his sentence. Prison bands, orchestras, football teams and dramatic societies provide entertainment inside the walls.

The problem of juvenile crime is still a serious one in the United States, where, during the depression, thousands of adolescent boys ran away from home and joined the gangs of homeless migrants riding in goods trains from one end of the country to the other and sustaining life by fair means or foul. Even to-day in some parts of Harlem, the coloured district of New York City, neither adults nor children are safe in the streets after dark because gangs of boys, usually armed with knives, wait to rob lone pedestrians. Most of the young criminals, both coloured and white, are 'Door-key kids,' so called because their parents, going out to work all day, hang the keys to their flats on cords round the necks of the children and leave them to their own devices. The fact that some of the boys have been successfully adopted into ordinary families and have settled down to a normal law-abiding existence proves that the problem is not insuperable and that it is caused by economic conditions which deny the child the happy home-life which is his right.

In a country with a population of 131,000,000, the door-key kids are a very small minority. The average American has never been victim or witness of a crime. Thousands of Chicagoans never saw a gangster or heard a shot fired during the period when the deeds of Chicago gangsters were headlined in newspapers throughout the world.

*The Requirements of American Life—A very Average
Family at Home—Dad, Mom, Sonny and Sis—Mom's
Work, Dad's Work—His Wages and where they go*

I HAVE been careful to emphasize the fact that American incomes vary, from those of people who have to feed themselves on about four shillings a week to the fortunes of some of the richest men and women in the world. It is, therefore, almost as difficult to illustrate the American standard of living in terms of a single ordinary family as it would be to answer in one word the question, "What colour is the rainbow?"

But although conditions differ so enormously from one place to another, there is a recognizable mean by which the average American measures what he knows of living conditions in other countries, and to which he refers when he speaks of "the American standard of living." It is not entirely dependent on income; a family which in many other countries would consider itself too poor to own either a car or a refrigerator will skimp and save in America until it has both, whereas a well-to-do family which elsewhere would undoubtedly have paid domestic help will do without in America. Furthermore, an American family will sacrifice many things if necessary in order to have a car, but wealthy families, even those in which two or three people can drive, do not necessarily have two cars.

There are exceptions to every rule. Somewhere, doubtless, there is even an American who does not approve of the motor-car. But to the average man, the need for the products of the machine age is self-evident. A hot summer climate creates a demand for refrigeration and air-conditioning; distance from place to place makes life without motor-cars and telephones difficult and even, under exceptional conditions, dangerous. America's standard of living

has been determined, in part, by geographical and climatic conditions.

Let us, however, leave generalizations behind, and observe the life of an ordinary American family, a family of four, with an income somewhere between thirty-five and forty-five pounds a month. That is the average income of the workers in pre-war automobile production ; it is the income many a school-teacher receives ; it is what a fully trained pharmacist might earn unless he owned his chemist's shop. By no one's standards is it Big Money. By some sociologists it is not even considered an adequate income for a family of four. But in sober fact, it is what a very large number of Americans live on for the greater part, if not all, of their lives.

How they spend that income depends partly on where they live. Obviously a city family spends a much larger proportion in rent than does a family living in a village where a cottage can be rented for twenty-five shillings a month.

But the dream of the man in the street, wherever he lives, is to ' own his home,' perhaps a surprising desire in a people so strongly characterized by restlessness and wanderlust. Surprising or not, it is a genuine goal, and if we visit men and women between the ages of thirty and forty-five or even older, again and again we find that they have ' just built ' or are ' planning to build ' or have a building fund set aside. So current is the phrase that the verb ' to build ' is thus frequently used alone.

When the American states what he is building, it is a ' home ' and not a ' house.' Americans use the word ' home ' very frequently and draw a distinction between house, which is the term applied to four walls, roof and floor, and home, which may be the same four walls, roof, and floor, but on which careful thought, labour, and affection have been expended. So Americans may say of a woman, ' She's a good housekeeper, but not a good home-maker.' Housekeeping belongs to the realm of science ; home-making to that of art.

Our ordinary American family may be called Weiss or Andruskiviec, O'Reilly, or McTaggart, but the father and mother are 'Mom' and 'Dad' to the children, and the children are likely to be called 'Sonny' and 'Sister' at least until they go to school. Sister will probably be called 'Sis' by the family all her life, but growing boys rebel at baby names like 'Sonny' and 'Junior' and prefer to answer to such tough-guy nicknames as 'Butch' or 'Chuck' (a common abbreviation of Charles) or 'Spike.' The Christian names which thus fall into disuse were chosen from the vast number of names made familiar by immigrants from many different countries; Sister Jones's baptismal certificate may read Carmen Lucinda Kirsten or Molly Etienne. Boys are more likely to be plain John or William or Arthur but, if the mother's maiden name is suitable, it is often given to the child as one of his Christian names, and the fashion is growing of using surnames, not necessarily of relatives, as Christian names.

In spite of the quantity of names from which she may choose, many an American mother prefers to make up her child's name herself, perhaps joining her husband's name with her own in some such combination as 'Willanne' or 'Arteva.' In the South, the fondness of the coloured people for long, elegant-sounding names led at least one mother to call her children 'Meningitis' and 'Appendicitis.'

Let us follow those lively youngsters, Spike and Sis aged ten and eight, home from school, on a cold mid-winter Monday. The children, warmly dressed in woollen snow-suits, rubber goloshes, and caps well down over their ears, follow the footpath across a couple of vacant lots, wading through a heavy fall of fresh snow. They live on the edge of a Mid-Western industrial centre with a population of a hundred and fifty thousand, and their house is similar to the thousands of others recently built around them by families moving out to escape the high property values down-town. Their address is 21750 West Carlos—the street runs, absolutely straight, right across the town, and is crossed at intervals by similar long straight streets running

at right angles, the space between each crossing being called a block. A hundred house numbers are allotted to each block, whether or not that number of houses has been or could be built. The address is more impressive than the site itself—an unfenced rectangle, now snow-covered, with a small white wooden bungalow built to one side, so that additions planned for the future can spread across the lot. At the back the last of the coloured clothes are still out on the line; Monday is wash-day and Mom has been hard at work.

Snow has drifted over the little-used path to the front door, and the children go round, as usual, to the back. There an unpainted plank storm shed is annually erected on the small porch. It gives the family a place in which to shake off the snow and remove goloshes without spotting the freshly washed kitchen linoleum and, of course, cuts off much of the draught under the door.

The air of the kitchen is hot and damp from drying clothes, and Sister's new spectacles become clouded with steam for a few minutes; then the mist clears and she sees what she has already smelled: a tray on the table piled high with fresh oatmeal cookies, the delicious and nourishing raisin and nut-filled buns that Mom often makes for the children's after-school snack. No one knows her recipe. When asked for it her invariable reply is, "Oh, I don't know; I just put in anything I have in the house."

"Boy, oh boy!" says Spike with his mouth full. Mom's voice rises warningly from the living-room.

"You can have three each and no more; your milk's on the shelf in the pantry. If your feet are wet, you'll have to change your stockings."

Mom comes out of the living-room where she has been sorting the stiffly frozen but nearly dry washing which she intends to iron the first thing in the morning. She is a pretty woman of about thirty-five, no longer quite as slim as she used to be in spite of spasmodic attempts to lose weight. Her hair, permanent-waved once a year and shampooed and set at frequent intervals by herself, is

arranged with what appears to be professional skill, and her face is carefully made-up, for the dry American climate does not produce rosy cheeks. Although the temperature outside is well below freezing, the house is heated to about 76° and Mom wears a short-sleeved cotton print house-frock and a laddered pair of sheer silk stockings. Similarly, when Sister removes the jacket and trousers of her snowsuit, she is found to be wearing a gingham dress underneath.

"Hi, Mom," says Spike, "d'you know what?" Mom does not know. "Mr. Lewis sure put that big guy, Laurie Mack, on the spot to-day. D'you know what he did? Well, Laurie—he's that big tall seventh-grader, just as big as Mr. Lewis himself—well, he started to fight with a little kid before school this morning, so pretty soon the little kid was bawlin', so Mr. Lewis came out and saw what was going on so he went back in the gym and got two pairs of boxing-gloves so——"

"So, so, so!" exclaims Sister impatiently. "Gee, don't you know any other word besides so?"

"So what?" says Spike and goes on with his story. "So he puts one pair on and hands the other to Laurie, who stands there looking pretty sick—are you listening, Mom? This is where the story gets good."

"About time," Sister comments briefly, while Mom with an eye on the clock begins to peel the potatoes for supper. Dad expects his meal at six, except on the nights when he is working overtime, and she wants to prepare a casserole dish containing potatoes, minced beef and a cream sauce. For the sweet, Dad is bringing home a quart of maple-nut ice-cream—an arrangement which lightens Mom's burdens every wash-day. Mom allows herself three pounds a week to feed her family of four, but tries to save a little of this whenever she can for emergencies and for her Christmas and birthday gift fund. She buys cheap meat and watches the grocer's advertisements in the papers, so that she can take advantage of the weekly specials, but she never economizes on milk and has a standing order for three American

quarts daily. (An American quart is one cupful less than a British quart.)

Her supply of fresh fruit and vegetables is supplemented by the produce of her vegetable plot in the backyard and fruit from her father's farm. When she is obliged to buy such vegetables as peas or pumpkin or sweet potatoes, she usually buys them tinned because there is less waste in buying tinned goods, the quality is frequently better than that she would get in the fresh vegetable market, and dieticians have told her that it is almost impossible for a housewife to preserve as high a vitamin content in cooking fresh vegetables as is done by the modern vacuum canning processes.

By the time Dad has come home, the meal is cooked, Sister has set the table, her brother has carried in the coal for the big coal-heater in the living-room and the kindling for the kitchen range. Central heating is one of the things the family has not yet been able to afford and heat is supplied by the black and white range in the kitchen, the tall square brown heater in the living-room, and a couple of portable electric heaters. Doors are kept open between rooms, so that an even temperature is maintained all through the house.

The story of the house and its furnishing is the story of Mom and Dad's married life. Dad bought the land 'way back in 1929, when he and Mom got engaged, less with the idea of some day living on it than in the hope that it would prove a profitable investment. After they were married, Mom went on working as a shorthand-typist in a lumber company office, and they lived down-town in a small flat for which they paid eight pounds a month. At first Mom loved every inch of it, from the wide sunny window above the kitchen sink to the indirect lighting in the living-room and the shower fixture in the bath. After the baby came she liked it less. There was not enough room and she no longer laughed at the bit of verse cut out of a magazine, which referred gaily to a cat that folded into a kitten in a flat that was 'two-by-four.'

It was then that the bungalow was started, two rooms only, at first; two more and the bathroom added later. The children still shared the small bedroom, but Sister would soon be wanting a room of her own, and already Mom was planning that she should have it. Each addition was being made in accordance with the original plan. Dad did most of the carpentry himself; he worked only part-time during the depression, and he had had two years of training in wood-work while he was in high school.

Meanwhile, it is not always easy to meet all the monthly bills to pay the grocer, the milkman, the coal company, the premiums due on two life insurance policies for large sums. Dad has made it a rule never to buy more than one thing at a time on the hire-purchase system, and so they successively acquired an electric washing machine, a vacuum cleaner, the car, and the refrigerator. The last is not yet fully paid for. But it was the pennies which Mom squeezed out of her housekeeping fund that bought the new radio.

To-night, when Dad has put the children to bed and Mom has washed up, they come back to the living-room to sink with sighs of relief into easy chairs round the coal-stove. Mom conscientiously darns one pair of socks, then gives herself up to an hour of crocheting. She is making a large lace table-cloth out of very fine ecru linen thread, crocheting small octagons of lace separately, and then sewing them together with tiny invisible stitches. Dad looks through two of the several magazines the family buys regularly. Then he reads the paper and twiddles the dial of the new radio. After a while Mom says,

"Why don't you ask Art and Mary in for a game of rummy to-morrow night? I'm going to choir practice until nine-thirty and you might as well have company. We can have coffee after I get back." Dad says "M-hm" approvingly, and presently gets up to go to bed. In order to be at the factory by eight o'clock, he has to leave home by seven-fifteen in the morning; except during the two months of the year when it is his turn to drive, he walks a half-mile to the West Central Highway, and there gets a ride with

four companions each of whom uses his car one fifth of the time.

Mom's crochet-hook moves faster than ever but it is soon evident that she cannot finish an octagon to-night. It is already ten o'clock and she must get up at six-thirty to cook Dad's porridge—oatmeal, cream of wheat, 'Wheatena' or one of the several other varieties of uncooked cereal on the market in America. She must also prepare his lunch—cheese and peanut-butter sandwiches, and a slice of apple-pie. He can buy a bowl of soup and a cup of coffee at the works lunch-counter.

And so the fire in the heater is banked for the night, the key is turned in the lock, the frosted inside window is opened and the outer storm window pushed out on its hinge. For every member of the family to-morrow will be another strenuous day; for Dad, going off to work in the dark frosty morning; for the children, running to school before the last bell rings at nine o'clock; and most of all for Mom, who must see that they all go off well-fed and warmly clad in time, must have lunch ready for the children when they come home at twelve, and a good hot supper waiting at six, must iron clothes, tidy the house, do her shopping, mend old clothes and make new ones, and somehow contrive to look smart and well-groomed, with her hair neat and her finger-nails polished, when she goes off to her choral society in the evening.

"Anyhow," thinks Mom, smiling to herself, "it's a good thing I'm not like that woman I heard about who always washed clothes *and* ironed them on the same day because she was always ill the day after!"

Preparation for Marriage taken seriously by both Sexes—The Strong Feminine Influence has brought Legislation to protect Housewives—Efficient Shops—Varieties of Foods—Saving Labour through Household Devices—The Climate helps the Housewife, and so does Advertising—Inside the little American Home—The Housewife likes a Scientifically Planned Kitchen—How she greets the Winter

MAX LAMBERT, in his book, *Les Etats-Unis*, says, "Chez les garçons, on observe un désir touchant de devenir de bons maris,"¹ and goes on to describe how, at an agricultural college in Texas, a course in Preparation for Marriage was recently added to the curriculum so that young farmers might learn how to dress correctly, and how to order a meal in a restaurant as well as how to care for a wife while she is pregnant.

Perhaps M. Lambert is not the only person who finds it 'touching' that American boys wish to become good husbands. As an American, and a woman, I find it no more touching than the desire of girls all over the world to become good wives. Admittedly the corresponding attitude in men is more unusual, but so evidently is it based on good sense that one can but applaud the impulse which has led many universities to establish for men as well as women classes in Preparation for Marriage. The realization that marriage is, as the young people taking the courses say, a fifty-fifty proposition, with trials and joys alike to be shared equally by the two partners, ought in itself to be beneficial, even though every married couple is likely to meet problems for which no college course in marital relations can provide a blue-print solution.

But the men's admission that they need to be taught how to be satisfactory husbands bears witness to the strength of

¹ "One notices, in the young men, a touching anxiety to become good husbands."

feminine influence on American life. Whether that influence has been for good or evil, it has not come to women without their conscious seeking. Whereas it sometimes appears that one aim of an Englishwoman's life is to avoid bother, American women believe that nothing worth having can be obtained without bother. Naturally, too, their attitude has been free of the influence of the English desire to be ladylike. So one finds American women expending a vast amount of energy in organizing support for legislation to protect the health of the community and the children in particular, in conducting an extensive programme of club and community activity, and in planning elaborate private entertainment, even on a very narrow budget. Occasionally, they make the shocking discovery that there are some things in life which no amount of bother will make possible. But that does not discourage them from doing all they can.

The strenuous activities of the American women have left their mark on the life of the country in many ways. It was the women who demanded and obtained legislation forbidding the exposure of unwrapped foods except under cover. They demanded laws requiring the exact contents of tinned and bottled goods to be printed on the label. They demanded legislation to prohibit the bringing of animals into food shops, and few things in England so shock the American woman as the discovery that not only is meat frequently exposed to all the dust of the street in open-front butchers' shops, but that even comparatively sanitary shops allow women to bring their dogs in on leads. The argument that the meat is cooked before it is eaten does not satisfy women who have what amounts to a pure-food complex.

Not only have women influenced legislation, but by continued insistence they have won privileges which make shopping in America efficient and business-like. The slogan, 'The Customer is Always Right' is observed pretty generally throughout the country. The American shopkeeper is more brusque than the British and may not always greet his customer with a 'Good morning,' but the cus-

tomater chooses her own fruits and vegetables, tests her melons by squeezing the ends, as she was taught at school to do, and is able to see for herself that she is getting her dollar's worth.

The Self-Service system, long prevalent in American restaurants, where customers file past counters laden with an abundance of food in almost incredible variety, has been adopted to some extent by both grocers and dress shops. Such a grocer's shop requires a very small staff of employees, but must have more floor space than the average British shops possess. All goods are displayed and the customer, supplied with a basket at the entrance, follows the lanes up and down the shop choosing price-labelled tinned goods, fresh fruit and vegetables, bacon, eggs, ham, all of which are paid for at the cashier's desk near the exit. The basketful of provisions is dumped into the back seat of the shopper's car, and the basket returned to the shop. Shopping baskets are not part of the usual equipment of the American housewife, who prefers to buy paper carrier bags when she cannot immediately deposit her purchase in the car. Similarly, at dress shops she may be permitted to choose and try on anything she likes, without waiting for the shop-girl's attentions.

The average American housewife still buys her household stores in the lavish quantities loved by the Victorians. Although granulated sugar can be bought by the pound, the usual order (rationing apart) is for a twenty-five pound cotton sack. Flour used to be sold most frequently in ninety-eight pound sacks; now forty-nine pounds or even twenty-nine is considered enough to buy at one time. Lard used to arrive in five-pound pails; but the widespread use of vegetable fats and cooking oils has reduced the demand and the average housewife buys lard a pound at a time. Ice cream is sold by pint and quart for serving at table.

I remember being told with shocked surprise of a woman who entered a shop and asked to buy one egg.

"A few times," said the grocer, "I've been asked for

three instead of half a dozen, but I've never had anyone ask me to sell one egg at a time." History had yet to teach us that there are many things worse than buying eggs singly.

It is usually true in America that shops which allow purchase on credit deliver goods to the customers' home, and that shops which do not deliver require cash payment. The latter are, therefore, known as Cash and Carry stores and are frequently members of the great chains of multiple shops which extend from one end of the country to the other.

The American's choice of fresh fruits and vegetables is naturally very wide in view of the variety of climate and the absence of trade barriers in his vast country. Certainly American ingenuity has made the best of the splendid natural conditions by providing a varied diet throughout the year. Many farmers, for instance, are now able to rent at a cost of about ten dollars a year lockers in quick-freeze refrigeration plants. Peas, strawberries, raspberries, wax beans—indeed, all the products of the garden and orchard—can be stored in the locker immediately after picking and, when thawed out months later, they have the flavour of freshly gathered products.

The variety of food is further increased by the interchange of recipes among the millions of immigrants who have brought their own tastes and customs to the New World. Women of all racial origins have learned to make Italian ravioli, Hungarian goulash, and Mexican chili con carne. To raise funds for their churches, Swedish and Finnish Ladies' Aids (Church Societies) sell Cornish pasties one week, American hot dogs the next. French women serve sauerkraut and apfelkuchen; Germans chop-suey and chow-mein. And all America likes salads, apple pie served with cheese, chocolate cake, and the dozens of different kinds of ice-cream which are served as the sweet course at dinner all the year round.

The adage, "Man's work's from sun to sun; Woman's work is never done" is as true in the country of labour-

saving devices as it is elsewhere. Although the work itself is less exacting, labour-saving devices not only do not run themselves, but they require care which, in itself, adds to the sum-total of the housewife's burdens. Refrigerators and vacuum-cleaners must be cleaned and oiled; electric cake mixers produce lighter and finer cakes than those Mother used to make, but they have to be taken apart and washed, as do pressure cookers and washing machines. Moreover, the high standard of accomplishment which is achieved by the use of labour-saving devices discourages the American from passing on to commercial enterprise tasks she can do so much better herself, though not without the expenditure of much time and effort.

On the whole, the American housewife does far more of her own baking than the English, and has a far greater dislike of laundries. Ninety-five per cent. of American women have no paid domestic help, and one reason for this is their preference for spending money on a machine and then using it themselves to be sure the work is well done, instead of paying wages to someone whose standards may fail in some way to come up to their own.

There is no question but that climate again enters in and helps determine women's attitudes toward their work. Washing and, more particularly, drying clothes at home is not so hard in a dry climate as it is in the damp air of Great Britain. Even baking is affected by humidity; English women who use American cookery books must ordinarily add 50° F. to the oven temperature prescribed for America, and must allow approximately half again as long a baking time. If she has an unexpected caller at tea-time, the housewife in the United States customarily retires to the kitchen and whips up a cake which will easily bake in fifteen or twenty minutes.

In early days the average American housewife often lived so far from markets that she remained an inexperienced shopper and was easily impressed. The immigrant workman earned far more than he had in the old country and he and his wife had spare cash for luxuries undreamed of

before they came to America. To come to America at all, people had to be adventurous, ready to experiment and to run risks. For all these reasons, Americans are on the whole much more responsive to advertising and good salesmanship than the British. As a result, the techniques of both salesmanship and advertising have been developed to a finer degree than in Europe. For instance, a state technical school announcing evening classes for people wishing to train themselves to become shop-assistants during the Christmas rush period offered instruction in the following points: The Salesperson's Job; Modern Philosophy of Salesmanship; Opening the Sale; Finding the Customer's Needs and Wants; Giving the Selling Points; Showing the Merchandise; Meeting the Customers' Objections; Closing the Sale; Suggestion Selling.

Americans regard advertising and salesmanship, not as parasite professions serving no real need, but as integral and valuable parts of the economic system, creating demands which keep the factories humming and which provide work for miners, lumbermen, transport workers, tool-makers throughout the country.

Hygiene is one sphere in which this responsiveness to advertising has in some cases improved the average home considerably. For instance, the last five years have seen the widespread adoption in American homes of high-powered indirect-lighting, which, reducing glare, nevertheless makes it possible for every person in the room to read, write, or sew without more eyestrain than he would suffer during daylight.

In 1936, the middle-class home was probably equipped with one or two bridge-lamps, a large floor-lamp, and several small table-lamps, each intended, like the Christian in the hymn, to brighten the corner in which it stood. Within two or three years, thousands of these lamps had been relegated to the attic or the dust-heap because electric power corporations had launched a nation-wide advertising campaign for 'Better vision' lighting. Despite the realization that a three-hundred watt bulb was going to be a great

deal more expensive than a half-dozen forty- or sixty-watt bulbs used one at a time, the public response to the argument that here was something not only new but beneficial to one's health enabled the manufacturers to mass-produce lamps to sell at a pound each.

If Hollywood has given the rest of the world the impression that average America lives in vast ultra-modern suites, with shining dustless floors, sliding doors, balconies, and built-in cocktail bars, it is only because the rest of the world forgets that nine-tenths of the movie-goers in America want to find their Never-Never land there, and have no desire to see on the screen their own drab little living-rooms, comfortable but old-fashioned front porches, and backyard view of garage and chicken run. As the theatrical paper *Variety* once announced in a ne plus ultra headline: Stix Nix Hix Pix—people living in the sticks, i.e. the rural areas, don't want pictures about hicks, i.e. themselves.

Far from living in a room that resembles a Hollywood stage set, the average American refuses to furnish his house with furniture in the modern style, preferring reproductions of Sheraton, Hepplewhite, and their early American adapters. Less than a sixth of the dwelling-houses in America were built with the aid of an architect, and far fewer than that were furnished to the plans of an interior decorator. Jacks of all trades, like their husbands, the women prefer to do as much of the actual decorating as they can, painting walls, enamelling furniture, and sometimes even hanging wall-paper. Advertising campaigns to promote the sale of modern kitchen equipment have resulted in the mechanization of the kitchen to a degree unparalleled in other rooms of the house.

The popular respect for scientific achievement (everything in America that is not an 'art' is a 'science') has naturally given the American kitchen the aspect of a food-laboratory rather than the living-room-plus-cooker that it often is in English homes. Science, too, has invaded the realm of cookery itself and the American housewife follows recipes in which measurements are given as precisely as in

medical prescriptions. Weighing machines are little used in the American kitchen; eight-ounce measuring cups and measuring spoons make accurate measurement simple except for fats, which are, however, frequently bought in standard marked weights. The scientific approach appears again in the American woman's preoccupation with food-values, her counting of calories and planning of balanced meals.

Where the seasonal changes are slight, the American housewife's annual routine is much the same as the English-woman's. But over a large portion of the country, spring and fall bring other jobs besides the usual house-cleaning, now to some extent superseded by a weekly schedule which disposes of most of the work before the house-cleaning week begins.

In the autumn, the screen windows and doors (to exclude insects) are taken down, ordinary windows and the additional winter storm windows are washed and the latter installed. The first shipment of the winter's ten or fifteen tons of coal comes in. If the house has central heating, the housewife must see that the furnace is clean and in order, while if coal-heaters are used, the tin pipes which run from stove to chimney must be dusted off and put in place after having been removed for the summer. The box of goloshes comes down from the store cupboard, the men put up the storm shed at the back door. The paraffin heater is lit in the garage, so that with the aid of anti-freeze solutions and a blanketed radiator, the car will function easily all the winter.

With the first snowfall, there is a lightening of the heart, an electric gaiety in the air and, though fingers and toes tingle at the unaccustomed cold, the blood runs faster and bodies are tense for action. Daily the temperature descends to lower levels, until it has gone below zero, to ten below zero, twenty below zero, or even lower than that. But the coldest weather and the strongest wind, piling up the snow, finding a way through draught-proofed windows, nevertheless causes a certain exhilaration. Last July, sweltering in the heat of the American summer, plump housewives, sitting

on their shady front porches, greeted each other with the perennial query, "Hot enough for you?" Now with ice in their eyelashes, their faces pink from the cold, they go out through the snow to First Aid classes, crying more gaily than ever to their neighbours the same old "Cold enough for you this morning? Cold enough for you to-day?"

Americans like Crowds—The Baseball Game—Other Sports—Walking not in Favour—The National Parks—Hunting, Shooting (with the Camera) and Fishing—The Place of Horse-racing—Young People's Clubs—Men's Societies—Women's Societies—Radio and Motor-car bringing wider Culture to the Average American

HABITUAL "viewers with alarm," foretelling the spread of totalitarian tendencies through democratic nations, may find reason for gloom in the spectacle of a championship football or baseball game, in 'that vision of the soaring stands' described by Thomas Wolfe: "The pattern of forty thousand empetalled faces, the velvet and unalterable geometry of the playing field, and the small lean figures of the players, set there, lonely, tense and waiting in their places, bright, desperate solitary atoms encircled by that huge wall of nameless faces. . . ."

Americans like crowds. If American gregariousness does not extend quite to the point suggested by M. Lambert (he decided that even honeymoons were spent with crowds) it does exert a standardizing influence on the entire people, making the lover of solitude an eccentric, the man-in-the-crowd the norm. And, superficially, there seems to be little to prevent a mob that rhythmically shouts, in obedience to the cartwheeling cheerleaders, "WE WANT A TOUCH-DOWN! WE WANT A TOUCH-DOWN!" from being taught to shout instead, "HEIL HITLER or "DUCE! DUCE!" But it would not be easy for a rising demagogue to divert that semi-hysterical mob spirit from its now clearly defined channels to the political sphere, in which the American characteristically moves with caution.

Baseball is still called America's favourite game, and the attention paid to the broadcast running commentaries by thousands who have never seen a big match themselves

would seem to justify this description. But probably no less popular is American football, a tougher and, if possible, faster version of Rugby. True, the real appeal made by baseball is not in the much publicized games (modestly known as the World Series) between the winners of the National and the American Leagues of baseball teams; it lies in the pleasure provided by softball, played by countless small-town amateur teams to local spectators who sit at ease in cars parked around the school athletic ground and express their approval of a good play by sounding loud blasts on the motor horns. As the name suggests, softball is a variant of baseball played, on a smaller diamond, with a ball which is both larger and softer than the usual one.

Played by teams numbering nine in regular baseball, or six in some of the softball clubs, baseball, like all American games, demands speed. In one corner of the diamond is the home-base at which the man at bat takes his stand. In the other three corners of the diamond are the first, second, and third bases. Each man at bat is given three chances (strikes) to bat the ball forward within the area bounded by the lines, to first and third base and beyond, as far as possible. If, when he bats the ball, it is caught by a member of the opposing team, the man at bat is 'Out' and cannot score; otherwise, he runs to first, and if possible to second or third base before the ball can be thrown to the opponent on base. A runner caught between bases is also 'Out,' whereas a successful dash round the three bases and back home is a home-run. Every runner who comes in safely to the home-base adds a point to the score. Each team is allowed to have three men 'Out' before it loses its opportunity to score at batting and must take the field. An inning consists of a turn at bat by each team, and a game consists of nine innings.

Obviously, skill in pitching is of tremendous importance; the best pitchers are those who can pitch such fast balls or such curves that the batter swings out wildly without hitting the ball, and thus 'fans out' without even getting to first base.

Doubtless one of the reasons why many an American is disposed to find the British incomprehensible is that he has seen in reality or on the films spectators applauding madly a stroke in cricket which in baseball would bring forth groans of anguish. Apart from its slowness, cricket has, to any lover of baseball, an Alice-in-Wonderland topsyturviness which makes it almost impossible for the spectator to regard it more seriously than Alice regarded the Duchess's game of croquet.

In both football and basketball, the major indoor sport of the winter season, Americans put such a high premium on speed of play that athletic coaches must, to the greatest extent possible, prepare their teams to react automatically to any given situation with previously planned courses of action. Games are contests of wit between the rival coaches almost as much as they are trials of the skill and stamina of the athletes. Scouts are frequently sent to the games played by rivals, to spot any new technique developed by them. When a coach can no longer devise new systems of play which confound his opponents he must begin to look for a new job, because he knows that his contract will not be renewed.

In addition to the great spectator sports, baseball, football, basketball, ice-hockey, and boxing, Americans are fond of tennis, golf, water and winter sports and indoor bowling (more energetic than the outdoor English variety, and by no means the preserve of the elderly). Recent years have seen the construction of innumerable public tennis courts and artificial lakes under the public works schemes, financed by the Federal Works Project Administration. Similarly, work relief schemes in the North have provided ski-jumps and toboggan slides and, during the winter, week-end 'snow trains' carry thousands of city workers from New York, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, to the snow-covered hills of New England, Michigan, and Wisconsin.

Walking, however, is not popular as a sport. M. Lambert points out that even the slogan of a famous brand of cigarettes, "I'd walk a mile for a Camel" is an indication

that the American regards walking as a penance rather than a pleasure.

Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to believe that, war conditions apart, the time is soon coming when the ability of an American to use his legs will be as superfluous as the ability to wiggle one's ears. And for those who do like walking, the United States provides amenities equal to any in the world. There exists, for instance, in the Eastern United States, a magnificent track which extends unbroken for hundreds of miles over the length of the Appalachian Mountains, from Mount Kearsarge in Maine down to the Blue Mountains of South Carolina. Maintained by the Appalachian Mountain Club, it passes through the vast forests of the New England wilderness, over Mount Washington, from whose rock-coned summit six thousand feet high the hiker can see the ranges below him on all sides. At intervals, the traveller, knapsack on his back, can find shelter in a three-walled hut built facing a great stone against which he can build his camp-fire and where he can lay his sleeping bag on a deep bed of pine-needles.

The comparative recency of America's pioneer epoch has combined with the attraction of the scenery to make camping and picnicking the primary form of recreation during the summer. It is true that ideas of camping vary from that of the person who sleeps under the stars and boils his coffee in a clean lard pail to that of the millionaire who camps in a log-cabin shack, complete with three baths, billiard-room, library, and a music-room with an organ. But the average man likes roughing it in a little cabin or a tent, although he uses his car more often than his own legs to get him to his camp-site and although he is not above building his fire in a stone outdoor fireplace where one is provided for him, as it frequently is in Federal, state, or county parks. The cabin may be his own, built and added to summer after summer, on a few acres cleared in the woodland on the shore of one of the countless lakes. It may be one of a group of small wooden huts rented on a commercial basis. Or it may be part of a

government-operated scheme and, therefore, available for use only by individuals belonging to such organizations as the Y.M.C.A., and the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts.

A 'park' in the United States is any plot of land for public use, from an urban square which looks like a London square without railings, to areas like Yellowstone National Park, which covers 3,471 square miles, and has within its boundaries mountains, forests, lakes (including Yellowstone Lake, twenty-six miles long), some 3,000 geysers and hot-springs, and the magnificent Yellowstone Falls and also, for the use of those who come to see these wonders, forty-five "improved camp sites, all equipped with water, sanitary facilities, and cooking grates."

Yellowstone is the largest and most famous of the National parks of which there are about thirty altogether. The most recently acquired is the Olympic National Park, in the Far Western state of Washington, which covers 648,000 acres, and includes part of the last virgin forest of North-west spruce and fir. In both national and state parks, conservation authorities work hand-in-hand with the park administrators, and it is now rare to find a park in which even restricted hunting is permitted.

The place of the gun is taken more and more by the camera as sportsmen discover that it needs more skill and is, therefore, a greater achievement to photograph a wild animal in its natural habitat than to shoot it dead. On the other hand, some of the finest fishing in the United States is to be found in the National and state parks, where the compleat angler and his wife (who is likely to be as compleat an angler as he is) can retire from the world and each other and settle down at some remote pool to try their skill.

The summer camping period is being used more and more to supplement the child's ordinary educational programme. In addition to the Scout camps, 4-H Club camps, and the Bible study camps run by religious organizations, camps are operated by schools or by organizations caring for crippled or handicapped children.

Among the most successful of these is one in Pennsylvania for the cure of speech defects in children. Until very recently, little had been done in American schools to help children who stutter, stammer, or are otherwise 'crippled in the tongue.' The Pennsylvania scheme was, therefore, launched as an effort to combine speech rehabilitation for the child with the training of advanced university students who were preparing to go into public schools to direct similar work there. The camp atmosphere, free from many of the restrictions of ordinary life, is in itself conducive to rapid adjustment to normal speech, but the cure is not left to atmosphere alone. Although the child's daily schedule includes all the activities beloved of campers—swimming, treasure hunts, nature study, campfires and story telling—speech correction is the chief issue even during these activities and, in addition, the child receives three hours a day of individual instruction in correcting his own difficulty.

Hunting, a word which to the Britisher brings visions of pink coats and horses, hounds and the fleeing fox, means to thousands of Americans a stream of automobiles pouring out toward the woods; it means that Tom, Dick, and Harry each sews a red patch on the back of his woollen jacket, so that he won't be shot by mistake, pulls on his heavy boots and shoulders the rifle which every American family keeps up in the attic or in the store cupboard. It means 'stag parties' in hunting lodges, stories by youthful hunters of the shooting of their first buck, and less amusing stories of hunting accidents, and then the long lines of cars heading back toward the cities, each with the carcass of a deer—and sometimes a bear or a timber wolf—tied across the front bumper.

Hunting deer derives from the American pioneer tradition and is a favourite sport of rich and poor, in spite of efforts to introduce riding after hounds. Here and there, particularly in the East where there is good hunting country, in the English sense of the term, there are long-established hunts. But the socially ambitious in many parts of the

land must reluctantly admit that the wide open spaces around them are too wide open for a sport developed in Britain's tight little isle.

Riding, however, has become increasingly popular in recent years, as have holidays on dude ranches. Here cattle raising goes hand in hand with the entertainment of visitors who can afford to pay well for an authentic Western atmosphere combined with the amenities of hotel life.

Horse-racing is Hollywood's favourite sport, and so many film stars, directors, producers and agents are race fans that, during the racing season, the production of films is seriously hampered. Mr. Rosten reports a rumour that Groucho Marx once appeared in the offices of a film executive dressed in a jockey's uniform because, he said, "This is the only way you can get to see a producer these days." Except in California and, possibly, in Kentucky, where the Kentucky Derby has long been established, horse-racing attracts less general interest than in England.

There are innumerable organizations for young people, supported by churches, schools, local authorities and the government itself. First in importance are the Girl and Boy Scouts, with troops established in schools and under the leadership of social workers throughout the country.

Of great importance in rural areas are the 4-H Clubs, the four H's standing for Head, Heart, Health, and Hand. These Clubs, organized under government sponsorship with trained agricultural and domestic science experts as leaders, encourage young people to stay on the farms both by providing social activities and by showing members how to use to the best advantage whatever resources they have. Members compete annually in raising prize pigs and cattle, in gardening, sewing, and canning, the winners at local contests being rewarded with trips to the state contests, and state winners with trips to Washington. There is no doubt that 4-H Club work has persuaded many ambitious boys and girls, who would otherwise have drifted to the cities, to stay at home and introduce progressive farming

methods where old-fashioned one-crop agriculture had previously impoverished farm and farmer.

Political organizations for young people have not as yet become national in scope. Young people in cities are far more vocal than the masses in smaller towns, who go no further than to unite in 'Young Republican' or 'Young Democrat' Clubs for the months just before a presidential election.

The only military organization in existence before the war was the U.S. Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps, which has units in military academies and in some high schools. Efforts of the Nazi German-American Bund to train a militaristic American 'Hitler Youth' were abortive even before the Bund was suppressed by Federal authorities. I have even heard of a Communist who joined the Bund in order to inject anti-Fascist doctrine into young minds between periods of broomstick drill. Strange echoes of his lectures eventually reached the ears of the Bund authorities, who thereupon discovered that his blood was no longer Aryan enough for that organization.

In contrast to the English, Americans are, as they say, 'great joiners.' The preoccupation of the American man with business has intensified a gregariousness which has been developed through years of membership in the Boy Scouts and school clubs. For business reasons, a small town tradesman is likely to join a half-dozen societies and clubs ranging from a friendly society such as the Elks or Oddfellows, to the Masons, if he can afford to become one, and the Rotary, Kiwanis, or one of the other business men's luncheon clubs. Election to membership in one of these clubs is often considered an honour, and their functions provide almost the only cultural influence which touches the men as the women's club programmes touch the women.

It was probably the desire of the mother to improve the lot of her children that first made the American woman a seeker after culture, and the fact that she has had little help from her husband has only stimulated her determin-

favourite Game

Baseball players in big matches are highly skilled. The game requires every ounce of their speed and stamina.

(Above) The pitcher, batter, catcher and umpire.

(Below) Yanks v. Tigers. A crowd of 70,000 at the Yankee Stadium.

Associated Press photos



ation to raise the tone of the family. Even during the depression she bought sets of encyclopædias so that the family could look things up at home. It was she who belonged to one of the book clubs and assiduously read the reviews in the club magazine. And it was she, even more than the men, who 'joined.'

She joined the women's auxiliary of the friendly society of which her husband was a member for business reasons. She became a Rotary Ann when her husband became a Rotarian; she, rather than he, went to the Parent-Teachers Association meetings so that she could maintain informal contact with her children's teachers. And finally she joined some such body as the Women's Club which is the nucleus of a group of activities, ranging from charitable work to studying poetry, drama, international relations, music and folk-dancing.

Has her search for culture been successful? Mr. Robert Waithman says No. "The United States," he writes in his *Report on America*, "contains some of the great women of the world. . . . But signs of a high intellectual level among a majority of American women are not easily discernible." On the whole Mr. Waithman is right, although it is perhaps too much to expect any very large section of humanity, whether male or female, to maintain a uniformly 'high intellectual level' at this stage of human progress.

The intellectual development of the American woman is too often impeded, however, by the lack of high standards by which her taste can be formed. In the Puritan and pioneer days, art and even good craftsmanship were necessarily thrown overboard and, although they are gradually coming back into the lives of the people, generations of small-town Americans have grown up without a single example of fine art to sharpen their powers of criticism. Had there been nothing to form their taste they might have retained the child's instinctive feeling for colour and design, but America was not a vacuum. There was no Parthenon, no Norman parish church; there was instead the third-rate copy of a third-rate model of red brick

Victorian Gothic. There was no Shakespeare ; there were only the school dramatics club and the summer tent shows, performances under the big top of plays depicting True Romance, followed by the sale, from the stage, of patent rheumatism cures, heart drops, and skin purifiers. There was no music except the Harry Lauder gramophone records and the Moody and Sankey hymns in church. Young artists copied calendar prints of 'Minnehaha' in a blue satin slip. Poets modelled their verses on Edgar A. Guest, whose challenging stanzas asked :

“ How do you tackle your work each day ?
Are you scared of the job you find ?
Do you grapple the task that comes your way
With a confident, easy mind ? ”

With such an example to follow, the housewife could and did woo the arts with a confident easy mind. But the radio and the motor-car have now made available to the masses artistic experiences which can engender real discrimination. Eager always to play fair and to give the artist a chance, even when they think he is crazy, passionately desirous of improving themselves, of learning all things, the Americans have in themselves and in their national life the possibilities of as fine a burgeoning of artistic power as history has seen.

Time is Money in American Broadcasting—Good Music by Radio—Right of Free Speech on the Air—Hollywood Films and the Average American—Important Films—Recent rise of Summer Theatres and Little Theatres—Rise and Fall of the National Theatre—Abundant Musical Comedy

“**W**AL, folks, Station KMDW greeting you in the voice of Al Powers, your announcer, and how about trying a little of Collins’s Shut-Eye the next time dawn finds you counting your millionth baa, baa, black sheep? Are you tired, are you depressed, do you feel that you’re a failure? Let Collins’s Shut-Eye restore your normal sleep, banish your headache, bring a smile back to the face you see in your mirror every morning. Collins’s Shut-Eye now brings you the Medianapolis Symphony Orchestra, conductor, Uno Borovits, in two seconds of Schubert. It’s yours, Maestro . . .”

That is what many foreigners think American broadcasting is like. The truth is very different.

The radio in America is a business enterprise, financed by advertising, but advertisers have found that too much ‘plugging’ of their product annoys a public which finds the bare announcement “Coming to you through the courtesy of——” quite enough.

The commercial influence has, however, given American broadcasting a style of its own. Time is extremely expensive on any of the three great broadcasting networks, the NBC (National Broadcasting Company), the CBS (Columbia Broadcasting System) and the MBS (Mutual Broadcasting System), the last, however, being a co-operative enterprise. Not a moment can be wasted in silent periods; every item in a day-long schedule must be precisely timed so that no sponsor receives a second more than he has paid for, or, conversely, that no sponsor is cheated of his time. The

feeling that minutes are precious, combined with the popularity of running commentaries on swiftly moving games like baseball, has produced in most American broadcasters a swift, dramatic manner of speaking. Radio technique is highly developed and important stations have their own repertory companies, consisting of experienced actors and actresses, and sound effects experts.

The American radio has immeasurably improved the public taste in music and now caters for that improved taste. More than one organization has learned that a generous attitude toward a radio audience that demands the best brings forth a generous response from a larger audience which is just beginning to find its way musically. For instance, the Metropolitan Opera Company broadcasts fourteen entire operas during its winter season, and finds that the broadcasts do not keep at home people who would otherwise attend the opera. On the contrary, they attract to the opera-house people who, until they heard Lawrence Tibbett or Rosa Ponselle on the air, had no idea what opera was and ascribed to the word some comic connotation, some hint of foreign affectation, such as the Americans ascribe to monocles and spats.

Broadcasting under war conditions presents many problems. Apart from the difficulty of keeping useful information from the enemy, there is much inevitable uncertainty about the accuracy of war news. The British answer to the problem has been to make every possible effort to check all news sources in order to ensure complete reliability. The Americans, on the other hand, have chosen to broadcast all news, whether it can be checked or not, in the belief that eventually the truth will out and the public will perceive it. Which method is the better only an expert can judge, but there is no doubt that the latter is more suited to the American temperament.

Before the war, at least, many American programmes were completely free of censorship. In such programmes as the Town Meeting of the Air, spontaneous questions and comments from members of the large audience in the

studio were not only allowed but invited. With broadcasting stations scattered through the country, and established in towns with a population as low as ten or fifteen thousands, American citizens have learned to accept with equanimity an unexpected street-corner interview with an announcer equipped with a portable microphone. Less reticent than the Briton, the American does not resent being asked by a stranger to broadcast to the community his opinion on subjects ranging from the local political situation to women in trousers. He would resent strongly any attempt to curtail his right of free speech on the air as well as in private.

It may be that the arbiters of what can or cannot be said on the air, under ordinary conditions and especially in programmes based on a written script, are the great business concerns whose financial support maintains broadcasting in America. But those companies are themselves dependent on the public and any overt move to suppress freedom on the air would soon result in a public boycott of the offenders.

The usual attitude—"I don't know whether the thing's good or bad, but since it's new I'll try it"—gave most Americans a passing interest in short-wave reception, and there are still many who like to twist the knobs and see how many foreign stations they can hear during the course of an evening. But serious short-wave listening has not become as customary as was once expected, partly because world conditions have increased the American's normal distrust of foreign propaganda and his own ability to withstand it. The American radio audience will listen to broadcasts from American commentators stationed abroad, but these are usually relayed on the national net-works, making short-wave listening unnecessary. Short-wave broadcasts by German, French, or British commentators find few listeners, because Americans do not want to be influenced by foreign points of view.

A more recent development than short-wave reception, and one of much less importance, has been the manufacture of radio receiving sets with a recording apparatus attached,

so that the average person may suffer the disillusionment, hitherto reserved for the few, of discovering that his voice does not sound as he thought it would. This attachment also makes it possible for people to record broadcast speeches as they hear them in their own homes.

Millions of Americans attend the cinema every week. In the winter, some go to get warm, in the summer some go to get cool; for whatever the outside temperature may be, the theatre, as Americans call it, provides comfort. But most people go to get comfort, not from air-conditioning, but from the screen. And since the home audience is Hollywood's best audience, the dreams and desires of the 'little man' in America can be interpreted from a study of the films.

The little man wants excitement. He wants to be reassured, to be persuaded that he is lucky to be where he is and that life in general is worth living. He wants the easy tear and the belly-laugh. He wants something colossal to make him forget his troubles, even if it is, to quote the phrase ascribed to Mr. Sam Goldwyn, "something colossal in a small way."

Hollywood gives him what he wants. If the rest of the world likes it, well and good. But it is the American movie audience that sets the tone.

Nevertheless, in 1941, Hollywood produced, in addition to hundreds of popular films, a half-dozen superb pictures, ranging from "The Grapes of Wrath" to "Citizen Kane." In such films as these, Hollywood proved that it could not only develop new film techniques, but that it dared to apply them to an honest portrayal of a social problem, and that it dared attack vested interests in spite of representing a vested interest itself. It has in this, perhaps, shown more courage than the Church in many countries.

Because the films and the radio, each reaching an immense audience, are the chief sources of entertainment in America, they add to the standardization of taste and outlook which is the result of mass-production, national advertising, and easy transportation. The theatre had similar influence,

though it was never so powerful, when, forty or fifty years ago, every small town had its Opera House to which came the great. Here the idol of the stage, Lillian Russell, appeared in person, after having had her golden hair shampooed by the local hairdresser, who was to describe the incident to other patrons for thirty years to come. But the films put an end to these contacts with Thespians in the flesh, and for two decades or more, only the few who could attend the theatre in the big cities had any opportunity to see professional actors on the stage. Whereas there were, in 1890, five thousand legitimate professional theatres in the United States, there were, in 1939, less than two hundred and, of these, approximately a quarter were in the Times Square district of New York.

Nevertheless, the dark age of the American theatre is past. Two great ladies of the stage, Helen Hayes and Katharine Cornell, led the crusade to introduce the theatre again into the lives of the people, personally touring the country with their companies in spite of the arduous toil and the expense which such tours involve in a country where vast distances must be covered although there is heavy snow and bitter cold. How much their work and that of Lynn Fontanne, Alfred Lunt and Eva LeGallienne was appreciated is clear from a story, told in Miss LeGallienne's autobiography, of a company that, delayed by the weather, reached at 11 p.m. the northern town in which they were due to perform. After hours of waiting in a chilly theatre, the audience patiently remained while stage sets were put up, in order to see the play.

The 1930's saw two other developments of great importance in the history of the American theatre: the establishment in almost every section of the country of summer theatres, and the establishment and abolition of the Federal Theatre Project of the Works Progress Administration.

The summer theatres filled the gap which has always existed because of the impossibility of maintaining a summer theatrical season in the simmering heat of the great cities. Finding themselves whatever accommodation they could,

often in disused barns, building the stage and equipment themselves, innumerable young actors and actresses formed companies and set to work to produce plays for the vast numbers of summer visitors who go out into the American countryside. Here and there they were led by dramatic coaches of established reputation whose companies attracted students eager for near-Broadway experience. Some of the summer theatres, particularly those near New York, became trial grounds for possible Broadway productions. Others, less ambitious, confined their efforts to reviving old plays for audiences which had never seen them. All were animated by the same desire—to re-establish the theatre as a living art in every community in the country.

In this, to some extent, they succeeded. Although amateurs had previously formed Little Theatre groups in many towns and had successfully produced many plays (indeed, one of the finest professional theatres in the country, the Cleveland Play House, was originally a Little Theatre), the movement received impetus from the interest aroused by the work of the summer theatres. Many communities are still isolated, at least during the winter, and have almost no contact with the professional stage, but they are now receiving the benefit of amateur productions of increasingly high quality. And should a village be too small, too scattered, too snow-bound to have a Little Theatre, it will have a Drama Reading Circle whose members take turns in reading to each other the current New York successes.

Amid the growing public interest in the theatre, the Roosevelt Administration made the first government grant in American history to a theatrical organization. The Federal Theatre Project, like the Writers' Project and the Art Project, was set up under the Works Project Administration, to provide suitable work relief to unemployed members of the profession, while at the same time satisfying a recognized social need.

Like ENSA in England, the Federal Theatre players carried their gifts wherever they were needed. Army trucks took companies to Civilian Conservation Corps camps in

New England when the temperature was 20° below zero. Other army trucks carried companies to all-Negro camps in the South at 116° in the shade. Tenement dwellers in city slums, lying on mattresses spread out on the pavements because the summer heat and insect life indoors were unbearable, were amazed when Federal Theatre players arrived to relieve the tedium by performing on mobile stages in the street. And in the meantime, in down-town (West End) New York, the F.T. was presenting a series of well-chosen and well-produced plays to the theatre-going public.

Unfortunately, the unquestionable success of the Federal Theatre was not considered sufficient justification for its continued existence when Congress determined to reduce the national budget. So the Federal Theatre, the first attempt in America to establish a national theatre, died.

It will come to life again. Meanwhile, nowhere is the theatre so filled with vitality as it is in New York, which has become the theatrical capital of the world. Although Hollywood has called away many, including Orson Welles and his Mercury players, New York is rich in talent, some of it recruited from the countries submerged under Nazism. In such writers as Eugene O'Neill, a winner of the Nobel Prize, Maxwell Anderson, Clifford Odets, Robert Sherwood, Sam Behrman, and George Kaufmann, the American theatre has a team of playwrights whose productions vary from poetic drama to political satire, but who have in common a pre-occupation with social problems instead of the tempests in teacups which so often attract the attention of British dramatists.

The pantomime, that peculiarly English product of the marriage of dramatized fairy tale and music-hall, has no counterpart on the American stage. Musical comedies, however, abound, and Americans remain true to one of their first loves, the circus.

Vaudeville—the American equivalent of music-hall—survived the rise of motion pictures, but only in the form of short stage shows preceding the film at large cinemas.

During the depression even these were abolished in most places, although they continue to be a favourite feature at the enormous New York cinema called the Radio City Music Hall. Many a star who first made a name in vaudeville now has a film or a radio contract, or both. Others have only the scrapbooks they kept in their heyday. Burlesque, a coarse variant of music-hall, which gave the world the Marx brothers, and New York the strip-tease artist, Gypsy Rose Lee, has, in this era of declining popularity, little else to recommend it.

Older Architecture is European inspired—Now the Prairie Style and Skyscrapers—Fine Bridges—The Romantic Trend in Literature and Present-day Realism—The Place of the Novel and the Short Story—Slow Growth of an American Tradition in Music—Spirituals and Jazz Music—Great Musicians now in America, Era of Musical Enthusiasm—Previous European Inspiration in Art and Present-day Originality

ARCHITECTURE and literature are the most mature Arts of the United States. Although the American from the more recently settled districts may stand in awe before any monument more than a hundred years old, there is a rich heritage of fine Georgian architecture in the East (where it is called Colonial), and in the South; there is the delightful old French and Spanish quarter of New Orleans; and finally there are the Spanish missions of the south-western states to provide him with a sense of architectural tradition when he travels in his own land.

Unfortunately, the fine sense of line and proportion which English craftsmen brought to America died out there as it did in England, and the domestic architecture which covered the newly settled areas in the nineteenth century was uniformly ugly.

Only with Frank Lloyd Wright, born in 1869, did an original style emerge. Learning from the architect, Sullivan, that 'form follows function' and basing his work on this principle, Wright developed the Prairie Style of domestic architecture, with its strong horizontal masses, long roof-line, and careful placing in relation to the landscape. Looking forward to the time when machines will have made possible for all a life of greater fullness and freedom, he is an advocate of the decentralized garden city. His Utopian plans may never come to fruition but, in the

meantime, Wright has done more than anyone else to improve the standard of house architecture in the United States. His imitators have learned good taste, although they lack originality.

Wright has not neglected skyscrapers and here his early training as an engineer has stood him in good stead. The solid skyscraper, however, a steel skeleton covered with heavy masonry, he considers an anachronism, and startles his colleagues with plans for skyscrapers of glass and sheet metal.

To many, the names of Chicago and New York are nearly synonymous with the word 'skyscraper.' There are few sights more impressive than the towering pinnacles which thrust above the ordinary roof level of a city; but a city skyline must be seen from a distance—from New York Harbour or from the curving shore of Lake Michigan—if one would appreciate the variety of its outline. Most of the skyscrapers are office buildings, with shops, arcades, and garages in their lower stories. Very few people live in them, the penthouse flats, on the tops of thirty- or forty-story buildings being rare except on the screen.

The skyscraper is a triumph of engineering as much as of architecture, and American engineers have been equally successful with dams, bridges, and other large-scale works. Early experience in constructing wooden bridges gave engineers a knowledge of the proper proportions and the disposition of wooden trusses that, later applied to iron construction, made possible a combination of lightness, simplicity, and strength. The George Washington Bridge in New York, the Eads Bridge over the Mississippi, and the Oakland Bay Bridge in San Francisco are among the finest in the world.

The writer of a recently published essay on "Arts in America" quotes a remark made by Jay B. Hubbell that "our literature has always been less American than our history." That this was true, until recently, is an indication of both the feeling of humility and the romanticism which were a part of the national attitude toward art in

all its forms. Although Americans were nationalistic politically, they wanted neither to read nor to write about the prosaic realities of American daily life. Even when they learned that a literary scene could be laid in America, they often preferred to write of the romantic Past rather than of the ignoble Now.

The romantic tradition is still strong in American letters, and is worthily represented by such writers as Willa Cather, Ernest Hemingway and Kay Boyle. But even before the day when Walt Whitman, the nineteenth-century poet, wrote, "I hear America singing" there was another tradition as well. Whitman's vigorous proclamation of his intention—

"To exalt the present and the real

To teach the average man the glory of his daily walk and trade."

—helped to bring American literature out of the library and into, not only the farmhouse living-room, but the kitchen, the workshop and the city slum. One critic said that Whitman "brought the slop-pail into the parlour."

Whitman's realism grew out of the disasters and social confusion of the period between the European revolutions of 1848 and the American Civil War of the 1860's. Later periods of unrest and depression intensified the tendency toward realism, and in recent years the complexity of the international situation and the outbreak of a second world war, for which many Americans were not psychologically prepared, encouraged writers to concentrate their attention even more firmly upon the American life in which they felt most at home.

The result of the new belief that every phase of life is a fit subject for an honest pen, is that present-day America lives in books. The realistic novels of Theodore Dreiser, Upton Sinclair and the early Sinclair Lewis have been followed by Stribling's record of life in the poor South, by John Steinbeck's novels about the dispossessed, by Anderson, Faulkner, Wolfe, DosPassos, Caldwell and

others. Writers with established reputations have joined with the Writers' Project of the W.P.A. in studying and recording the history, geography, and social development of every section of the country. Poets other than Whitman long ago wrote realistically—Edgar Lee Masters, of small town characters in his "Spoon River Anthology;" Carl Sandburg, of Chicago; Robert Frost, of New England. Now Edna St. Vincent Millay discusses current problems in books of verse and Archibald MacLeish writes a moving commentary on a book of photographs showing the life of the "under-privileged."

In spite of the scarcity of book shops in small towns, Americans buy enormous numbers of books, many of them through book clubs with nation-wide mailing lists. Several factors—the simultaneous distribution of thousands of copies through the agency of a book club, high-pressure advertising (publishers claim that \$20,000 may be spent on launching a single book), and the eagerness of the American to be in the swing and to keep up with the neighbours, combine to make the reading of best-sellers, the moment they are published, more important than it is in Britain. Consequently, a book which everyone from the New York Big Business man to the wife of the dust-collector in Azousa, California, is reading and discussing in January may be almost forgotten by June.

Such a situation weakens the effect of a novelist's social criticism, making a nine-days-wonder of anything except the most powerful indictment of existing society. Nevertheless, if reform does not follow immediately, the way for it is being prepared by the gradual liberalization of American thought by a succession of novels on social problems.

American authors have achieved remarkable success in the short story, a literary form as well suited to the American temperament as the essay to the British. Although most magazines publish only stories of conventional type, such publications as the bi-monthly "Story Magazine" afford a market for the experimenter. Perhaps the most

sensational discovery of the last decade has been William Saroyan, a young Armenian from San Francisco.

The national anthem of the United States of America is "The Star Spangled Banner," the melody of which is as difficult to sing as it is thrilling to hear sung well. Since 1832, when an American clergyman wrote the words, "My country 'tis of thee" to the tune of "God Save the King," Americans have frequently preferred to sing the simpler anthem. Indeed, when the film "Cavalcade" was shown in the United States, untravelled Americans not yet so well informed about the British as they were to become after the Royal Visit, were bewildered when, at the end of a picture which dealt entirely with the history of England, the band played a hymn which they knew only as "America."

To many critics of American culture it has seemed that this is typical of the situation in which the United States finds herself musically. They point out that in the first hundred and sixty years of her existence as a nation, the United States failed to produce a single composer of first importance; that she has had to import not only her serious music but many of her musicians. And they are right.

In the past America has had Edward McDowell and a host of hardworking conscientious craftsmen, many of whom studied in Europe, most of whom said nothing new in a style that was not new, but they said it fairly well. Eager to develop an individual style, they were, nevertheless, determined not to be too modern. They wrote libraries of programme music full of bird songs or street noises. They thought of typically American music in terms of Indian songs, although the primitive culture out of which grew the plaintive Indian melodies was incomprehensible to the transplanted Europeans who were trying to establish an American tradition.

While they were establishing a widespread knowledge of their art, as was necessary in a country where Puritanism

and the frontier had left little room for much artistic endeavour, other forces were at work.

Stephen Collins Foster wrote, without fanfare or reward, the songs which perhaps represent America's greatest contribution to the world's music; hundreds of anonymous Negro singers combined the white man's hymns with the rhythms of jungle dances, and, using a five-toned scale, created their 'spirituals'; and the influence of the Negro and the Jew, the Scotch-Irish and the rest of the vast family of nationalities in America, produced jazz—music intended to stimulate dancing. John Tasker Howard, an outstanding authority on American music, describes the means by which it does this as follows:

For this purpose it sets a regular 4/4 beat going. But instead of simply grinding out four beats . . . and two accents, a primary and a secondary, in each measure, it *implies* as many of these accents as possible, and leaves them for the moving body of the listener to fill in.

Opinions about jazz may vary, but there is no doubt that it has had and will continue to have the attention of composers of serious music the world over, and particularly in the country of its origin.

American composers are no longer intent on playing safe, on writing in strict accordance with threadbare formulæ. But most of them have no desire to write solely to shock people, as the young composer Brant did when he wrote a quartet for 'any four instruments' and a 'sacred sonata' for 'hardware (ironmongery) and piano.' The work of such composers as Harris, Copland, Ruggles, and Ives, gives Americans reason to believe that if the country has not yet produced a musical giant of the stature of Beethoven or Brahms, the way for one is being well prepared.

When the ships that carry students abroad for study sail the seas again, they will probably sail westward to the United States as well as eastward as in times past. Not only has the country been enriched musically by the

arrival from Europe of Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Hindemith, Bartok, Milhaud, Krenek, Kurt Weill, Nadia Boulanger, and many others. Interest in music is universal.

In 1940 there were estimated to be from 150,000 to 200,000 bands and orchestras in schools alone. Comparatively small towns, such as Minneapolis and Seattle, each with about 350,000 population, support first-rank symphony orchestras. To the National Music summer camp at Interlaken, Michigan, comes an annual gathering of the finest young musicians in the country, to work together, compete with each other, and receive an intensive training under brilliant teachers. And the Federal Music Project, which forms a small part of the programme of the Works Project Administration, has performed invaluable service, both in putting to work unemployed musicians by organizing more than thirty new symphony orchestras as well as innumerable smaller groups, and in introducing the works of contemporary American composers.

The American attitude toward art is crystallized in the remarks made by Harry Wickey, a contemporary artist of considerable power, when, discussing in his autobiography "Thus Far" a statue of his called "Old Wrestler," he says

I have been told by some that this piece is superb as sculpture, and by others that it is very bad as sculpture. This has never bothered me a great deal, for I feel that it is superb as a wrestler. If I were to take my choice of the two extremes, of sculpture without the wrestler or the wrestler without the sculpture, I am all out for the latter. There is too much being produced these days that looks more like sculpture than anything else, and I think art and life are much the worse for it. Instead of it being first sculpture and then something else, I prefer it being first something and have the sculpture follow.

Inevitably, early American painting, like American music, followed the European tradition, but the painters were more successful in gaining recognition abroad, as the reputations of Gilbert Stuart, Benjamin West, Sargent and

Whistler bear witness. But although for well over a century many American artists received their training on the Continent, they frequently shared that antagonism to European attitudes and styles which led an American musical critic to refer to 'the artificial refinement' of European composition, and an American art critic to take delight in 'the quality of genuineness of a thing fresh and unspoiled by excess of sophistication' which he found in American painting.

It may be questioned whether European refinement is indeed 'artificial' to Europeans or whether European art is spoiled by 'excess of sophistication.' But it is good that Americans should develop that independence of thought which will eventually enable them to give complete expression to American life.

So recently as in 1934, the American critic Thomas Craven was crying out in sorrow, "Art in America is an affectation of caste. It has ceased to function as a social need and has become the property of dilettantes." But even as Thomas Craven spoke, thousands of Americans were seeing Grant Wood's painting "American Gothic" for the first time and, seeing it, experienced a thrilling recognition of reality which they had never felt in looking at the European inspired paintings they had hitherto called American art. Georgia O'Keeffe and John Marin had already produced in America work of international interest; and John Sloan had been called "the most distinguished etcher of modern times." Now the leaders of a more strongly American, and particularly Middle Western, school of painters began to come forward: Thomas Benton, Charles Burchfield, John Steuart Curry, Grant Wood, and Wickey.

Art too has benefited from the Works Progress Administration, and the interest in the development of a national school of painting has been intensified by the establishment of the Federal Art Project. Public buildings, including post-offices, schools, town halls, libraries, and government buildings in Washington were decorated by unemployed

artists with murals illustrating American history. These naturally vary in quality but they served admirably to bring the artist out of the Ivory Tower (regarded by many as a padded cell), into which he had been driven, and down to the level of ordinary life. They have made painting pictures a craft once more.

The Federal Art Project has also done work in fields hitherto scarcely touched : it has made a complete study of folk-art in the years when the United States seemed to have none but when every woman who wove a bit of cloth, when every man who built a foot-bridge, expressed in his work whatever artistic feeling was in him. Similar studies have been made of crafts brought to the United States by immigrants.

Of American sculptors the greatest is probably George Grey Barnard, who in England has never received the honour that is his due if only for his magnificent statue of Lincoln. A model of Barnard's Lincoln, a huge ungainly figure with large hands and feet and the lined uncouth features of the great leader, was said to be too crude to be set up in London, and was sent to Manchester.

London received, instead, the statue by another fine American sculptor, St. Gaudens, of which the original is in the classic temple that forms the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. An American sculptress represented in London is Malvina Hoffman, who has made sculptural studies of all the races of man for the Hall Of Mankind in Chicago, and whose work, celebrating the friendship of the English-speaking peoples, dominates the lower end of Kingsway from its eminence on Bush House.

Epstein America cannot claim, much as she would like to. Although he was born in America and started his work there, New York never completely satisfied him, and after he came to England he became completely British in his way of life.

*American Language grown out of English Language—
Developments due to different Conditions and different Needs
— American Usage and American Slang—Language vigorous
like the People—In Spite of Language differences, Americans
and British can still Talk Heart to Heart*

AN American small town newspaper, describing a film star's return to America after a sojourn in England, exclaimed with delight, "His visit to England has not changed him at all. He did not even say 'Cheerio' when he met us."

That story, with its evidence that English and American are to some extent two languages, can be capped by hundreds of others, some revealing the Americans' ignorance of the English language, and others revealing British ignorance of the American tongue. The English have never studied with a dictionary the classics of American verse and prose in the way that the Americans have studied English literature from Chaucer to Masfield. Many an American can say with Emily Dickinson,

* I never saw a moor,
I never saw the sea;
Yet know I how the heather looks
And what a wave must be.

Thousands of adult Americans can remember trying to draw a sketch of an English downland for their 'Enoch Arden' notebook, or having a teacher who had gone to England during a summer holiday, not only to visit Westminster Abbey and Stratford-on-Avon, but to hear the skylark and see the may. Very few adult Englishmen studied the contours of a canyon at school, or heard their

* *From "The Collected Poems of Emily Dickinson"*
(Jonathan Cape).

masters describe the colour of the sumac leaves or the song of the bobolink ; their attention had been turned eastward and south, to Rome and the olive groves of Greece.

It cannot be denied, however, that one reason why the British have found the American language incomprehensible, is that for the greater part they have not liked it. Even to-day, the number of young people who 'adore' American slang and who use it (sometimes incorrectly) as much as possible, is small in comparison with that section of the British public which feels, unconsciously perhaps, that it is presumption on the part of Americans to have developed their own language. Theirs is the wholly understandable indignation of the hen seeing her duckling take to water.

On the other hand, it was inevitable historically and geographically that the Americans should develop their own manner of speech and vocabulary, and that this speech and vocabulary should establish itself with remarkable uniformity over the length and breadth of the country, with the result that to-day the number of people speaking standard American is perhaps greater than the number speaking standard English.

Whereas the American, by virtue of his acquaintance with English literature, is able to differentiate between accepted usage and English slang, the English often find it hard to differentiate between American slang and American usage. Not all Americanisms are slang ; not all slang is accepted usage in America. Americans are, on the whole, little worried over the problem of preserving the purity of the language. That English is spoken by approximately 200,000,000 people is due to that adaptability which purists deplore. It is a mistake, however, to believe that Americans have no linguistic standards, and that the man in the street calls a woman a 'moll,' a policeman a 'flatfoot,' and a cigarette a 'coffin-nail' or otherwise uses the language of a character in a story by Damon Runyon.

It is natural that 131,000,000 Americans are adding more words to the language they speak than are the 45,000,000

British to theirs. But the Americans' delight in their own inventiveness, their enjoyment of vigorous diction, so like the pleasure the Elizabethans found in the use of vivid metaphor, has caused them to enrich their vocabulary to a greater extent than is explained by numerical differences in population. That some of their inventions have crossed the Atlantic is no concern of theirs. They are willing to grant the premise that English and American are indeed two languages, neither of which can, in comparison with the other, be considered 'right' or 'wrong.'

The American idiom dates from the earliest period of colonial settlement, when the Pilgrim Fathers and Cavaliers had to invent Americanisms to describe the landscape, vegetation, wild animals, and weather which were so different from those of England. During the three centuries since 'canoe' and 'maize' were introduced by the first colonists, the American language has steadily followed its own pattern of development, retaining some words which became obsolete in the old country, and casting aside others which continued to be in use there; adding Indian words and names; adapting new words from the vocabularies of non-English speaking immigrants; and, always, inventing new words, some good and some bad, in which to express the ideas which grew out of their particular environment.

So it happens that the Americans use the words 'to guess' meaning 'to suppose,' and 'to loan' meaning 'to lend,' as they were used by Shakespeare; but have forgotten such words as 'heath,' 'fen,' and 'bracken.' From the Spanish they have taken 'rodeo,' 'lasso,' 'stampede.' From the Canadian French came 'prairie' (grassland), 'portage' (land between two rivers over which a boat can be carried), and 'levee' (a bank of earth raised alongside a river to prevent floods). The Germans contributed 'hamburger,' 'to loaf,' 'delicatessen,' and 'wiener' (the sausage which, served hot in a roll, makes a 'hot dog'). 'Boss' and 'Yankee' were taken from the Dutch. Most of the words which were borrowed, often in a simplified form,

from the Indian languages, were adopted in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: 'moose,' 'raccoon,' 'squash' (the vegetable), 'toboggan,' 'moccasin,' 'caucus.' Apparently no words in common use in the United States were derived from the languages originally spoken by Negro slaves.

Naturally it is the American penchant for fabricating new words and phrases which has most aroused the ire, the amusement, or the admiration of English visitors. On the one hand, the Americans found a naïve pleasure in coining long words, e.g. 'gubernatorial' and such comic inventions as 'rambunctious' and the out-of-date 'lallapaloosa.' They call a lift-boy an 'elevator-operator,' a flat an 'apartment,' the teaching staff at a school, the 'faculty.' On the other hand, a taste for making picturesque compounds has brought forth innumerable words: e.g. 'skyscraper,' 'wire-puller.' Similarly, much of the slang in common use embodies metaphors: 'soft-pedal,' 'knee-high to a grass-hopper.'

Just as an English radio programme may set thousands of people to using certain catchwords and phrases, so expressions used in American broadcasts, in the films, or in advertisements, periodically sweep the country. Slang is national rather than local; Americans are so interested in the language that they allow few nuggets of phraseology to lie buried in some small corner of the land. Newspapers and magazines report examples of vivid diction and introduce into the general vocabulary terms invented by special groups.

Such expressions are often both vehement and extravagant, but constant use soon robs them of any meaning. His language thus reflects the American's abundance of energy, and perhaps, even more, his restlessness and insatiable desire for novelty which forbid him to remain content for long with whatever he has.

Sometimes the meaning of slang changes while it is crossing the ocean. The Americans invented 'jitterbug' to describe the exponent of a type of dancing; the British

have more commonly used it to describe a nervous person.

Advertising copy has a noticeable effect on popular speech and a deplorable one on spelling. Americans have long preferred such forms as 'labor,' 'traveler,' 'marvelous,' 'aluminum' and 'check' (for cheque), but it was the use of electricity in advertising which introduced such distortions as 'nite,' 'naborhood' (suburban), and 'sox.' Amateur publicity-men have sprinkled about the countryside signboards bearing self-explanatory barbarisms such as 'eatory' and portmanteau words like 'motel' (hotel for motorists). While Americans customarily designate their houses by numbers, they are fond of naming their summer camps, and often do so in the manner of the advertisement writers, inventing names like 'Camp Happidaze' and 'Joyalife.'

Journalists, too, have introduced into common use many words which have little to recommend them, even to American ears, except their brevity. Countless Americans read the headlines in their newspapers and then turn to the sport section and the comic strips. The headline must, therefore, tell the whole story, and must tell it in a few syllables.

The necessity of compressing ideas into headlines has forced journalists to create a special vocabulary. Every investigation is a 'quiz'; every prohibition a 'ban.' The winner of a contest 'bests' his opponent; an aggressor nation 'nabs' a new territory; the Supreme Court 'voids' legislation declared unconstitutional.

Fortunately, the language of the headlines is not the spoken language of the United States. Neither is that peculiar idiom which English writers put into the mouths of American characters in their stories. Americans may say, 'He sort of ran' about a man who ran in odd manner, or half-ran, half-walked. They would never say, as the winner of a contest in writing in the American style wrote in an English magazine, 'He sort of shot him dead.' There is no half-way point between shooting and not shooting.

The American of ordinary education does not 'fix' to do things although he often fixes his car while his wife fixes a dress.

Variations in dialect exist, although to a much smaller degree than in Britain; and when turns of speech which are purely Southern in origin, for instance, are written into the dialogue spoken by Vermont farmers, the effect is as strange to Americans as American attempts to write English dialogue must be to the British. Hollywood is probably as much to blame as anything for the fact that the untravelled American often thinks that all English people drop their aitches; that they all speak as if they have hot potatoes in their mouths; that all men go about calling each other 'Old chappie' and even 'Old dear.' An English accent in the speech of an American, however legitimately acquired, is regarded as an affectation. But people in the United States generally admire an English accent in an English person.

Whatever difficulties the Englishman may find in understanding American newspaper headlines, or in perceiving the differences between the colloquial language of two sections of a country, or in mastering the large vocabulary of words and phrases not used in England, these difficulties are slight in comparison with that caused by the fact that many words have totally different meanings in the two countries. An Englishman and an American may say the same thing and mean something different. Each may unwittingly offend the other. Each may use words which to the ears of his companion carry a hint of rudeness or affectation which thereafter colours the tone of the conversation.

Thus an American may say of an English friend 'He is a regular guy' meaning 'He is a good sport.' 'Guy' is equivalent to 'fellow' or 'chap' and is used a great deal in colloquial speech: "Who's that tall guy with him?"

A word which may easily give offence to Americans is 'homely.' This means in American 'ugly' or at least very plain; the word which is used to convey the English sense

is 'homey.' No American woman likes to be described as a homely person; and Britishers who tell Americans about the homely girls in England are doing their country an injustice.

Many Americans use the words 'yard' and 'garden' interchangeably. After tea in the garden an American soldier may say to his English hostess without intending any disparagement, 'Well, I have enjoyed being out in the yard.'

However, although a portion of the standard American vocabulary is entirely unfamiliar to English readers, and an even more formidable obstacle to understanding exists in that common vocabulary of words which convey different meanings or implications to the peoples on either side of the Atlantic, language in itself need not be a barrier between the Americans and the British. Americans cannot think and speak in exactly the same language as the British because they are not British. Into the making of their language has gone their origin, their country and its history, their attitudes and their ways of life. He who disparages the languages, disparages all of these things; he who understands these things understands the language.

It is true that the American's 'billion' is not the same thing as the Englishman's 'billion'; neither is his 'dessert' the same as the Englishman's, nor his 'haberdashery,' nor his 'first floor.' But these are dry words, words which people make, not words which make a people.

The living words are the common possessions of both the British and the Americans. 'Memory,' 'truth,' 'sorrow'—these have no need for interpreters. They speak for themselves and for the men who have used them.

Let Shakespeare speak with a Louisiana drawl, Milton with a New England twang, Walt Whitman and Lincoln with the voice of the cockney. The best of England and America are in the words they utter, and their great words are identical.

SOME AMERICAN WORDS USED IN THE BOOK

- Alumnus* : graduate of an American school, college or university.
- bobolink* : North American songbird.
- caucus* : local committee for political party organization.
- coed* : used colloquially to mean 'woman university student.'
- 'Colonial'* : (of architecture) Georgian style.
- dessert* : the sweet course in a meal.
- filibuster* : a way of deliberately speaking against time in a Senate debate in order to prevent passage of a legislative measure.
- first floor* : the ground floor in America.
- haberdasher* : dealer in small articles of men's clothing.
- hookworm* : an internal parasite bred in conditions of filth and malnutrition.
- lallapalooza* : a slang word to describe something very enjoyable.
- penthouse* : a flat with sloping roof and roof-garden built on the top of any tall building.
- rail-splitter* : worker who splits trees into sections for use in making fences.
- share-cropper* : tenant of small holding who pays rent in produce (Southern).
- soft-pedal* : to proceed cautiously (slang).
- sumac* : American shrub : its leaves turn crimson in Autumn.
- sweet potato* : tuber not related to ordinary potato ; sweet in flavour (origin, Southern states).
- to graduate* : to complete a course of study in any type of educational institution.

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